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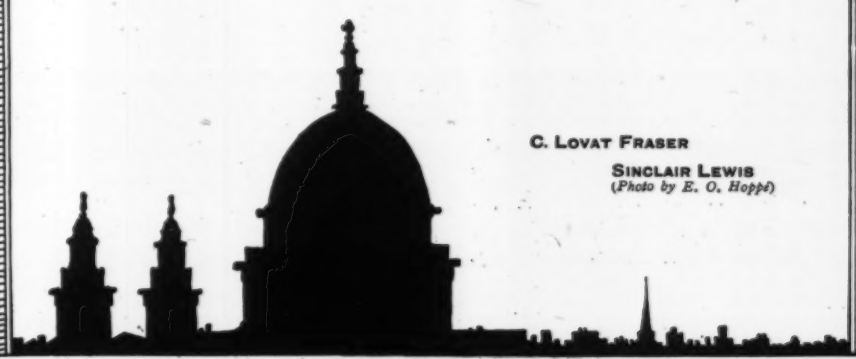

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All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of The Bookman, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration.

News Notes.

"Success," by Lord Beaverbrook, a guide to success by one who has got there, will be published shortly by Messrs. Stanley Paul.

"English for the English: A Chapter on National Education," by George Sampson, makes a strong protest against our present educational system which aims at turning our children prematurely into "hands" and does not meet their needs as human beings, and it offers a plea and a practical programme for a real humane education. The book is to be published shortly by the Cambridge University Press.

Captain E. R. G. Evans, C.B., who was second in command of the British Antarctic Expedition commanded by Captain Scott, and took over the command after Scott's death, has written an account of the expedition in "South With Scott," which Messrs. Collins will publish early in the autumn. Captain Evans was during the war in command of H.M.S. *Broke*, which with H.M.S. *Swift* engaged six German destroyers, sinking two and torpedoing a third.

Mr. Lewis Melville, whose story of "The South Sea Bubble" has just been published by Mr. Daniel O'Connor, has written a Life of John Gay, which will be issued shortly by the same publisher.

Mr. G. B. Burgin, who in his time has known almost everybody who is anybody in the latter-day world of letters, has written his recollections in the "Memoirs of a Clubman," which Messrs. Hutchinson have published. The same firm will publish this month a new novel of his called "The Man from Turkey."

A company of over four hundred editors, journalists and others associated with the literary, newspaper and general business worlds entertained Sir William Berry at the Savoy Hotel on July 20th, to mark their personal appreciation and to compliment him on the baronetcy that was recently conferred upon him. Lord Leverhulme presided, and the other speakers included Lord Burnham, Lord

XUM

Dewar, Lord Riddell and Mr. Harold Cox. A silver salver was presented to Sir William Berry who, responding to the toast of his health, speculated on the possibilities of increased liveliness in Fleet Street if, instead of devoting himself to politics, Mr. Lloyd George had realised his original ambition and become a journalist

---

The full story of D'Annunzio's adventure at Fiume is told in "A Political Escapade," by the Rev. J. N. Macdonald, O.S.B., which Mr. John Murray is publishing.

Mr. John Long is publishing this month "Good Grain," by Emmeline Morrison, the winner in his recent £500 Prize Competition for the best First Novel.

If we hesitate to congratulate Mr. Thomas Seccombe on his appointment to the Chair of English Literature at Queen's University, Ontario, it is only because we are not sure that our congratulations should not be given to the University. Mr. Seccombe is one of the ablest and most scholarly of our men of letters, a brilliant critic, with a saving grace of humour, and a lecturer who knows how to interest as well as to instruct his audiences and, without being poor, we are not so rich in his kind that we can afford to lose him without hesitating to let him go. He is one of THE BOOKMAN's oldest and most valued contributors; for ten years he was assistant editor of the "Dictionary of National Biography"; he has been a frequent contributor to *The Times Literary Supplement* and many other literary journals, and if he has been too busy to write more than four or five books ("The Bookman History of English Literature," with Sir William Robertson Nicoll, "The Age of Johnson," "George Meredith," etc.), he has edited and written introductions to as many as any man living. On the whole we very warmly congratulate both Mr. Seccombe and Queen's University, and add our own among the sincerest of all the good wishes that will go with him from the multitude of his friends.

Photo by F. Hilaire d'Areis. **Mr. Kineton Parkes,** whose "Sculpture of To-Day" Messrs. Chapman & Hall are publishing. From a portrait in oils by Francis Derwent West, R.A.

A new volume of poems by Mr. Hibbart Gilson, "In and Out of Heaven," will be published next month by Mr. Henry J. Drane. Mr. Gilson is the great-nephew of Sir James Denham, the mystery poet-knight of the last New Year Honours.

Messrs. Cassell have just published a new book of "Queer Stories from *Truth*." This makes the twenty-second of these volumes and contains thirty stories that well maintain the reputation the series has won for freshness and "snap" of style and variety of interest.

Mr. Arthur Greening has written a romance of the Thugs in India—"The Curse of Kali"—a tale of love and mystery and desperate adventure all steeped in an eerie atmosphere of the occult, a swift, vivid tale that gives the reader a new thrill almost every time he turns a page. The book is to be published forthwith by Messrs. Jarrold.

The special feature of the July-September number of the *Readers' Guide*, issued by the Norwich Public Library at 2d. (post free 3d.), is an annotated reading list on Dante, prepared in view of the sexcentenary which will take place on September 14th. The annotated list, compiled by the deputy librarian (Mr. Charles Nowell) includes the best translations of Dante, and an excellent selection of the best books about his work.

"Trooper O'Neill," by George Goodchild, a new story of Canadian life, dealing with the world-famed North-West Mounted Police, will be published by Messrs. Robert Hayes this autumn.

A new novel by Mr. William Caine, "Mendoza and a Little Lady," a story of artist life in Chelsea, will be published shortly by Messrs. Putnam.

Wednesday, October 12th, is the date arranged for this year's Festival Dinner of the Newsvendors' Benevolent Institution, at which Mr. C. H. St. J.

Hornby is to preside. A strong Dinner Committee has been formed, and as it is expected that the demand for seats will exceed the space of even the King's Hall, Holborn Restaurant, early application for tickets should be made to the Secretary, Room 9, Memorial Hall Buildings, Farringdon Street, E.C.4.

Mr. Leonard Slade, of Melbourne, the Grand Old Man of Australian bookselling, is regarded by book-lovers throughout Australia almost with veneration, and by his staff with a great affection. Lately Mr. Slade has celebrated the forty-seventh anniversary of his entry into bookselling. With all experience, and a memory like a catalogue, he is at the zenith of his professional powers, and Australian book-lovers generally have taken the occasion of the celebration of this anniversary to wish him long life and continued activity. Mr. Slade was born at Clunes and was contemporary with Mr. John Longstaff, the artist, and Dr. William Hewitson, Principal of the Presbyterian College, Dunedin. He was one of the original members of the Shakespeare Society of Melbourne. Reminiscencing, Mr. Slade tells us that Samuel Mullen and George Robertson both landed in Melbourne together from the same old clipper—the *Great Britain*; that Mr. Cole, after a journey interrupted by wreck, landed from South America on the same day. The one day brought into Melbourne three men who were to found great bookselling houses in Melbourne, each house famous throughout the Commonwealth and known throughout the world. Mr. Slade's grandfather, the Rev. P. Durham, is closely connected with the early history of Australia, having been Chaplain at Port Arthur during the time of Sir John Franklin.

Photo by Monteat (Melbourne). **Mr. Leonard Slade**

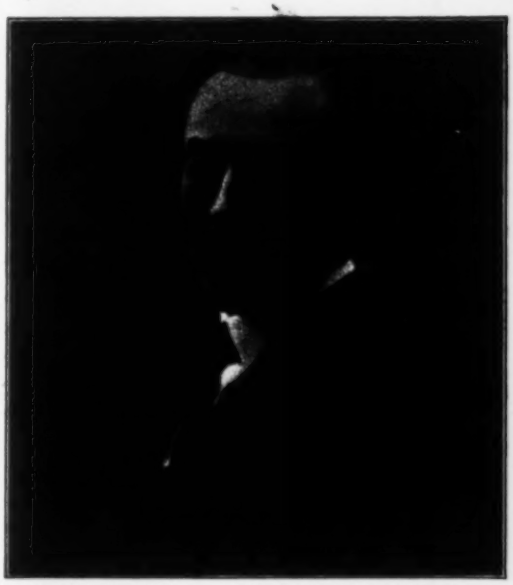


Photo by H. Walter Barnett. **M. Constantin Nabokoff,**
Author of "The Ordeal of a Diplomat" (Duckworth), reviewed in this Number.

Lieutenant-Colonel Frederick Ernest Whitton, C.M.G., the author of the biography of Moltke, which is reviewed in this Number, was educated at Trinity College, Dublin. Entering the Leinster Regiment in 1894, he served in the South African War. Graduating at the Staff College in 1904, he passed to the Intelligence Department as Staff Captain and was later associated with the Historical Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence, of which he became Secretary in 1913, in which capacity he devoted great attention to the official history of the Russo-Japanese War. In 1914 Colonel Whitton (then Major) served with the 6th Division, B.E.F., and was severely wounded during the first battle of Ypres. While on half-pay for wounds he acted for a term as Master of "Modern VIth" at Harrow. He was then appointed to the General Staff, serving first in the War Office and subsequently at G.H.Q. in France. Colonel Whitton's best-known works are "The Marne Campaign" and his "History of Poland from the Earliest Times," but he has also written a good deal of prose and verse of a lighter character. A comic opera entitled "A Manœuvres Night's Dream," which he perpetrated in his younger days, was a clever skit on the introduction of steam mechanical transport in military manœuvres, and was sufficiently pungent to attract the attention of certain highly-placed persons. Colonel Whitton has a delightful personality (writes a correspondent) and is widely popular in Service and literary circles.

It is a good while since we had a new story from Dick Donovan, who has written a romance of Australia, "Out There" (2s. 6d.), which Messrs. Everett have published. It is a striking story of love and hate, and the triumph of love over death, and is sure of a welcome from the multitude of Dick Donovan's faithful admirers.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

It is true of Mr. E. V. Lucas as it was of Goldsmith that he writes all kinds of books but touches no subject that he does not adorn. The record of his last year's journey round the world, "Roving East and Roving West" (5s.; Methuen), has the charming lightness and whimsicality of touch that is characteristic of all his work. From India and Japan he passes to America, a shrewd observer, jotting down his impressions of people and places as he goes and picking up capital anecdotes by the way. Perhaps the American section is the best, and to say that of a book that is entertaining throughout is to say a good deal.

Mr. W. Douglas Newton,
Author of "Low Ceilings" (Appleton).

Mr. Sydney A. Moseley's "Haunts of the Gay East" (3s. 6d.; Stanley Paul) is a book of travel of a different kind. He takes you into strange, bizarre by-ways of Cairo, Constantinople, Sofia, Belgrade, Budapest and Vienna, and has curious stories to tell of the lives of their people. He does not give you the whole picture, but the lesser known, more romantic side of it; he looks for the unusual and the startling and finds them. The glamour of the East is over his pages and his tales are edged with something of the mystery and excitement that you get in the Arabian Nights.

"Sport in a Nutshell," by C. E. Hughes (1s. 6d.; Jarrolds) is a very diverting encyclopædia of as many sports as most people can think of and some that they would not think of at all under that heading. It is all done in an irresponsible spirit of burlesque; even golf is treated without reverence and cricket with a frivolity that is more amusing than the game itself. The humorous illustrations of Fred Buchanan add not a little to the oddity of a joyous little skit.

"Low Ceilings" (8s.; Appleton) is a notable advance on Mr. W. Douglas Newton's first novel, "Green Ladies." It is a careful, mordant study of the effect of a conventional suburban atmosphere on the minds of those who live in it. The principal characters work in the City and live round Denmark Hill; they preserve the ordinary humdrum amenities of middle-class family life, its snobbish social code, its stuffy ideals of respectability, all the narrow moral and material gospels against which certain of the younger generation are more and more rising in revolt. Beatrice Harbour is an essentially modern girl born of essentially old-fashioned parents. Clear-sighted, independent, she fights against the low-ceilinged, suffocating home atmosphere and, in defiance of everybody, marries her unorthodox musician and is happily justified of her obstinacy. Her brother Owen makes desperate efforts to break away from the strangling conventional courses that are planned for him, but does not succeed until the war comes to give him his chance. Her older brother Donald, who tells the story, is more gifted and original than either but has been more subdued to his cramping surroundings, and for a long while is only half-unconsciously chafed by them. He falls under the influence of two women. One, Barbara Major, is pretty, alluring, provocative; and under her distracting spell his artistic genius shrivels, his designs become commonplace and he looks like drifting into failure. The other, Agnes Gillow, like his sister Beatrice, has broken away from the petty traditions of suburbia, is clear-eyed, courageous, large-minded, goes her own way and always inspires Donald to go his, whenever he comes within range of her finer influence. The story resolves itself into a problem of which of these two women shall gain the ascendancy and mar or make the career of the man who is equally susceptible to the charm of both. Mr. Douglas Newton handles his theme subtly, with humour and a dramatic and emotional power that result in what is at once an absorbingly interesting tale and a sound piece of literature.

Mr. George D. Herron, a friend of President Wilson and one of his advisers, has written in "The Defeat in the Victory" (8s. 6d.; Cecil Palmer) a very impressive and disquieting book on the Peace negotiations in Paris and their outcome. He believes the Peace terms advocated by Mr. Wilson would have given us a world very different from the dissatisfied, distracted, warring world we are trying, without much hope, to make the best of. He sees nothing but disaster ahead of us unless the Peace terms are revised and brought nearer to realising the more or less discredited ideals of President Wilson. It is a very earnest, arresting, closely-reasoned appeal. Mr. Herron writes with authority and we commend his drastic criticisms to those who are responsible for the task of putting our house in order.

In "The Tower of London" (6s.; John Lane) Mr. Walter G. Bell furnishes a history of the Tower itself and relates the stories of its famous prisoners. It is a guide-book of the best sort, well illustrated by Mr. Hanslip Fletcher.

Mr. Fergus Hume has attempted in "Three" (7s.; Ward, Lock) more character-drawing than is usually indulged in by writers of sensational fiction. Juve Mendel, a mentally unbalanced musician of genius, is a man of exotic moods and wild passions that form an emphatic contrast to the cool, level-headedness of Archie Godwin. On the day of the murder of his grandmother, Juve goes up to his room and, a few moments before the tragic discovery, is seen there, lying asleep. Consequently he is unable to throw any light on the mystery that implicates a father and son. For all this, suspicion falls upon him, and the question to be settled is—which of the three is guilty? It is an intricate plot, full of complications and false clues, and the reader has to go on reading to satisfy his curiosity. Mr. Hume's skill at concocting such mysteries is so well known that his name on the cover is sufficient guarantee of a good, melodramatic yarn.

Photo by G. Felici. **Professor George D. Herron.**
Author of "The Defeat in the Victory" (Cecil Palmer).

"I'm glad I married a man with a lot of conscience, but it's often very uncomfortable for them that's nearly related," says Mrs. Jerritt, wife of the old coachman in "The House with the Golden Windows," by J. E. Buckrose (8s. 6d.; Hodder & Stoughton). Milly Wimperley, who inherits the house and the fortune of the old maiden aunt who has lived there undisturbed for many years, is another person with "a lot of conscience." When she discovers she is an adopted child and not entitled to the property she relinquishes the house and the luxury for which it stands, and pays dearly for her conscientiousness. But the payment brings its recompense. Mrs. Buckrose tells the story with a freshness of outlook and vigour of style characteristic of all her work, and never allows the interest to wander for a moment.

THE BOOKMAN GALLERY.

JOHN OWEN.

NOT the least interesting thing in this life is the chance of each new publishing season bringing along its own particular sensation or discovery, and whilst 1921 may have many good things in store for us yet, it already seems certain that a large share of the literary honours of the year will go to "The Cotton Broker," a first novel by Mr. John Owen.

Judging by the reviews it would be true to say that without exception all the critics are pleased with this book, which takes for its background the business world of Liverpool and tells of the progress of "Prosperity" Crossford, the son of a widowed office cleaner, whose rise from sample boy to apprentice, from apprentice to salesman, from salesman to partner and from partner to President of the Liverpool Cotton Association is carried stage by stage by this new novelist in so convincing a manner as to make one feel a personal thrill as each fresh triumph is attained.

But whilst the critics are undoubtedly pleased they are apparently also a little puzzled. They are pleased with the youthful vigour and freshness of the work, they are puzzled by its maturity, its mastery of material, its firm grip of character. "What manner of man is this," they seem to say, "who puts together his first novel with the finished skill of an experienced craftsman?"

It may then be of interest to state that one of Mr. John Owen's Welsh ancestors having coined the now famous epigram to the effect that "Liverpool is the capital of Wales," John Owen on leaving school was himself apprenticed to the Liverpool cotton trade. For five years John Owen went in and out of Liverpool cotton offices, for five years he moved in a world which though rich in adventure has till now been unexplored by the novelist, and for five years he met and learned to know the types he describes so well in "The Cotton Broker." Hence the vigour and freshness, hence the atmosphere and convincing detail of his book.

Having given five years of his youth to the Liverpool cotton trade, John Owen, with a determination very typical of him, left the cotton market and apprenticed himself afresh. But this time he chose an even more exacting trade—this time he apprenticed himself to literature. That apprenticeship has covered a number of years of close and painstaking service; it has included much journalism and a little, at least, of nearly every branch of the writer's craft, and it is an apprenticeship that only now, with the publication of his first novel, is considered by John Owen to have been faithfully worked out. Hence the maturity of "The Cotton Broker," hence its mastery of material and its sureness of touch.

John Owen is a great giant of a man who during the time he lived in the north indulged the mild and pleasant

little hobby of taking midnight rides from Liverpool to London on a push-bike—a distance of something like two hundred odd miles, which he used to cover in less than twenty hours! Yes, a great giant of a man with a finely-shaped head suggestive of considerable intellectual power, eyes that twinkled humorously behind his glasses and that sort of boyish shyness of manner which sometimes goes with giants.

The author of "The Cotton Broker" could have written a novel ten years ago; but he could not have written this novel. He has a very high conception of the novelist's art and very definite ideas of what a novel should be. He was content to wait until he had cultivated the strength of his hand sufficiently to satisfy his own high standards. And, as with so many of his generation, the war had much to do with his final development.

When "the world's great storm" arose, John Owen in the spring of 1915 put aside his pen and writing pad, lifted his six feet two inches of brawn and muscle out of the arm-chair in which he usually works and rode away to the war—on his bicycle. His experiences in a Cyclist Corps and later for a short time as an infantry officer in France, cannot have been without their artistic value to this keen student of human nature. When after the armistice John Owen found himself back in his arm-chair again he felt that at last he was ready for his first novel, and "The Cotton Broker," a book of over ninety thousand words, was written in less than five months.

It is a book that would not be unworthy to rank as the supreme effort and climax of a career. With John Owen it is only a beginning. He is not yet middle-aged and most of his music is still in him. A man who can work in comparative obscurity for ten years to fit himself to embark on his life's work, and who as his form of relaxation has had the habit of riding a push-bike from Liverpool to London in under twenty hours, is surely a force to be reckoned with!

STANLEY SALVIDGE.

BEATRICE KEAN SEYMOUR.

YOUTH is never a crime, but in criticism it is always a handicap. Numbers come early to the poet, and very naturally he lisps them, but a lisping critic is a *lusus naturæ*. Such a one, in a recent effort to overcome the lawful impediment placed on him by the handicapper, succeeded only in aggravating the plight of Criticism in a day when Youth has seized the galley's helm. We were bidden to sit up and take notice that since the Brontës there have been no women novelists—save two living writers who were named—to be mentioned in the same breath with them and with Hardy, Conrad, D. H. Lawrence, and J. D. Beresford. It would be easy, if it were worth while, to comment on this dictum to some purpose, the comment to cover three heads: (1) The work of the two women writers who were named, (2) the work of really important women writers who were not fortunate enough to secure mention, and (3) the real nature of the difference (less in degree than in kind) between the work of the men writers who were named (and who, by the way, are far from being equally great) and the women writers who *could be* named. The truth is that, in technique, Charlotte Brontë has been excelled by many later women novelists, in whom, however, the bright flame of the spirit never burned. And because it is the spirit alone that gives life, Charlotte Brontë, with all her literary faults upon her, remains a writer permanent and apart.

I am led to make these remarks by my feeling that in Beatrice Kean Seymour we have with us to-day a writer in whose soul is a flame fanned by a wind blowing down from Haworth moor. The spirit of indignation that inspires passages such as the memorable one dealing with the Pamela episode in "Invisible Tides," and the eager enthusiasm that is manifest in all she does, afford evidence (and there are other evidences) of her affinity with the northern sisters for whose writings she has an admiration not the less warm for daring on occasion to be critical.

It is refreshing nowadays to come on a writer of her distinction who is truthful and modest enough to disclaim the Celtic strain. Remote as her work is from that of the late Miss Tucker, Mrs. Seymour may claim with that improving writer to be A Lady Of England—and a Londoner finds pleasure in adding that she is London-born. She entered on the literary life with no advantage save that of a non-literary family past. At London University Professor Gollancz and A. G. Guthkelch discovered her latent gift, and she was quick to benefit by the wise counsels of the last-named scholar—since untimely lost! In her fuller development she has perhaps been influenced most by the Brontës and Thomas Hardy, though the crowded canvases of Dickens hold her with their magic. Among the moderns she is drawn to writers like May Sinclair and John Galsworthy—nor must I forget H. G. Wells, whose influence on the technique of the contemporary novel is not to be gainsaid, and scarcely to be withstood. Moreover, she resembles Wells in her wonderfully receptive mind and her capacity for interpreting her impressions and lighting instinctively on hidden truths in the process.

I make no apology for interposing a word of tribute to Mrs. Seymour's personal charm. Her beauty is of the type that Rossetti loved to paint, but spoiled by exaggerating to the point of heaviness. Rossetti's women are immobile and aloof; Mrs. Seymour is all animation. Her eyes are the most expressive I have anywhere seen—soft grey eyes, which sparkle and deepen in colour almost to violet under play of emotion. A luxuriance of rich brown hair gives its own note of harmony to features which are the more memorable for their radiant intellectuality.

She has come definitely to the front with "Invisible Tides" and "Intrusion." Technically, "Intrusion" marks an undoubted advance on the earlier book. It is better proportioned, and the unities are more strictly kept. There is no hiatus in the scheme of it, no show of uncertainty in the telling.

It is all of a piece, performance ever marching with intention. Roberta, the central figure in the story, arouses one's interest as a psychological "case," without once appealing to the heart. The trouble is, she doesn't inspire respect—not that it is the poor girl's fault, for she might retort on us (and it is the kind of retort she would have enjoyed making), "I am as I am, and I can't be no ammer!" As the type of a girl quite commonly met with in life, she is vividly realised and convincingly set down. A parasitic creature, incapable of passion, and concerned to use the lure of her sex and beauty in exploiting her lovers for material ends, she tricks the idealistic Allan into marriage, and, later, seeks to undo the marriage by repeating the trick. She has all but accomplished her purpose when she is killed in a motor accident. A hasty critic has objected that Roberta's death is, artistically, a fault—apparently because he thinks she is killed in order to "save the situation." The "situation," however, was already developed, and past "saving," and Roberta's death is dramatically probable, while the irony of it should lead the foolishest critic to suspect that it might be good art. To just such a climax Thomas Hardy himself might at any time have wrought a Wessex tale. It is the fashion to chide a novelist for dealing out death at a crucial point in a story, as though the death artistic were unheard of! Death at times affords the happiest of endings—but suddenly I remember that other critical convention that disqualifies even a happy ending as necessarily inartistic!

Photo by Basil. **Mrs. Beatrice Kean Seymour.**

The fiat of a cruel Editor on the subject of space prevents my explaining a personal preference for "Invisible Tides" as a *story*. I must, however, call attention to the uncannily penetrating study (not yet sufficiently praised), under the thin disguise of "Mr. Bletchington," of a man famous or notorious (a long range of epithets is there for the reader's choosing) in the public life of our time. Thackeray confessed that George IV. was an enigma that baffled him. "I try to take him to pieces," he says, "and find silk stockings, padding . . . underwaistcoats, more underwaistcoats, and then—nothing!" I am confident that Mrs. Seymour would have filched for us the secret of Florizel, though whether it would have been worth the filching is another matter. Even the Bletchington secret—but I won't say it! and anyway it detracts not at all from the merit of her achievement. For the rest, if asked to say what qualities in Mrs. Seymour's work impress me most, I answer—its fundamental brain-work, and *style*. Having already discussed the subject in this journal, I now merely reiterate my opinion that her style distinguishes her above all other women writers of her generation.

Laughter, we know, is never far removed from tears; and though I will not say that in her books Mrs. Seymour ever gets quite to the point of compelling our laughter (whatever she does with some of us out of her books), she has, like Shakespeare's Beatrice—that disdainful lady whom she resembles in nothing beside—a leaping wit. There was a star danced, and under that was she born. Her liveliest sallies, however, are struck out of a vein of melancholy that, if I know her aright, runs never very far beneath the surface. They were wise words that Matthew spake in "Every Man in His Humour": "Your true melancholy breeds your perfect fine wit, sir." And even were they not generally true, they are true as applied to any thoughtful person, howsoever jocund-hearted and racy of speech, living in a world that never was a merry one since the fairies left dancing. In these distressful days one is only too like to cry with Stephen (in the play just quoted)—"Have you a stool there to be melancholy upon?"

Looking back along the way by which Mrs. Seymour has come, it is not for me to take credit in foretelling her triumphal onward progress. For the gods are very wise, and gifts such as those with which they have dowered her are not given into unprofitable hands. A very womanly woman, she is in the direct line of descent from Charlotte Brontë, who first shocked a sublimely masculine world into understanding somewhat of the passionate intensity, the clear spiritual vision, and the intellectual courage of the womanly woman. In her attitude toward the great humanitarian issues which confront the world of our day, she is imbued with the crusading spirit. She thinks for herself, and her honesty is equal to her independence. She would be a missionary—if she were not an artist; and in a world where artists are few and missionaries are beyond number, we may thank the Providence that seasons justice, on occasion, with mercy. At the same time, her art is no meaningless affair of cubes and daubs and grotesquerie. She is no repeater of idle nothings, no mere "proficient in amusive feats of puppetry," but an interpreter of things shrewdly observed, a witty exponent of profound and sometimes unpalatable truths, a light-handed garnerer of "fruitage from the tree of life."

F. C. OWLETT.

XUM

THE READER.

AMERICAN AUTHORS OF TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW.

By Thomas Moult.

UNTIL a year ago the appearance of an American writer in our English publishers' lists has been, apart from Henry James and William Dean Howells, mostly due to considerations outside literature, and even then nearly as infrequent as blackberry bushes in the middle of Manchester. So narrow was the range that Jack London and Mr. Harold Bell Wright, Mrs. Wharton and Mrs. Kate Douglas Wiggin actually rubbed shoulders. The main difficulty of the reader who wished to acquaint himself with American literature in the making was, not counting that of dialect, to restrain himself from bunching the mass of its writers together and dismissing them as a pack of slangy sentimentalists conforming so little in their methods to English standards as to be unreadable. Mrs. Wharton and Jack London, as a matter of truth, were about the only younger authors of account who found and maintained a place with us. Then, suddenly, for reasons that are still a little vague, a larger view was adopted. No longer did we assume the patronising air. It began to be recognised as the business of authors in the States to write after their own individual or national fashion—to exercise, in short, the primary right that is the artist's everywhere; and the business of the reader, to receive them unconditionally.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Sinclair Lewis.**

With this change of attitude towards American writers has come, not as a consequence but none the less coincidentally, a change in the attitude of the writers themselves. Hitherto, from Mark Twain downwards, practically all of them expressed in their work an optimism, a "forward-looking," an "uplift," that was hardly palatable to the European mind. If this quality was lacking there appeared an equally unwelcome brutality, as in Frank Norris's books, Stephen Crane's, or that amazing best of eight novels by Abraham Cahan, an editor of the Jewish *Forward*—"The Rise of David Lavinsky." This brutality has persisted longer than the optimism; although at the present time, when we are welcoming the work of contemporary Americans a little too wholeheartedly to be discriminating, neither "realism" nor "sentimentalism" is its dominant character. Perhaps it was that Mr. Theodore Dreiser, with "Jennie Gerhardt" and his tremendous "trilogy of desire," especially its second volume, "The Titan," uttered the last word in stark and ruthless realism—a realism that combined Zola and Hardy and the Frank Norris of a little-known masterpiece, "McTeague."

The author of "The Titan" (published in England by John Lane, as are several of Dreiser's works) is well ahead of his contemporaries in the matter of years, being born in 1871 at Indiana, with German blood in his veins. His influence is to be noted most directly in the late David Graham Phillips; in Mr. Robert Herrick; Miss Willa Sibert Cather; and Mr. Sherwood Anderson, whose "Poor White" is to be introduced by Jonathan Cape in September, and followed by "Winesburg, Ohio," next spring; while Miss Cather's books are in the care of Heinemann. A critic whom the *Athenæum* has described as "the most original and rapidly becoming the most important critic in the States," Mr. H. L. Mencken, lately proclaimed Miss Cather's "My Antonia" a truly glowing and beautiful piece of work, "far above anything ever imagined by Mrs. Wharton." To those who have read "The Age of Innocence" this will appear an amazingly generous tribute. There is no other American authoress, all the same, whose future seems to promise so much. "My Antonia," which was issued two years ago by Heinemann in England, followed "Alexander's Bridge" and "O Pioneers." Apart from volumes of short stories, these are all that Miss Cather has yet written. "Youth and the Bright Medusa" will appear this autumn. It is a collection of tales concerning the artistic life, and readers will surely recognise that nothing so beautiful and yet so true has been done in the short story since Miss Katherine Mansfield's "Je Ne Parle Pas Francais" than the opening piece, "Coming, Aphrodite!" though it lacks Miss Mansfield's subtle irony altogether.

Everybody here is reading "Main Street," and so much has been said about this now famous book since its publication by Hodder & Stoughton and Harcourt Brace & Company, that we need only to mention Mr. Sinclair Lewis and his powerful study of provincial life in the U.S.A. for the purpose of recalling that some critics have ranked with it, as works of art, Mr. Floyd Dell's "Moon-Calf" and Mr. Sherwood Anderson's "Poor White." Mr. Dell is a Socialist editor who adopted an unpopular attitude on the war, yet this, his first fiction, seems to have delighted even his political enemies. English readers will have quick opportunity of testing his quality, for "Moon-Calf" is to be issued by Heinemann and followed by "The Briary Bush," a volume of short stories that has not yet appeared in his own country. In a recent character-sketch of him, Mr. Sinclair Lewis has written that he does not know of anyone who combines economics with a graceful genius for loafing, and for smiling at pretty, adorable things, as does Mr. Dell:

> "Slender, young, rather shy, discussing the exact significance of the Third International with overwhelming knowledge, yet all the while wishing that he could be off to the Isle of Ægeus, where they sleep and sing and make verses and make love and haven't yet heard about even the First International."

This passage, incidentally, conveys a good idea of

"Moon-Calf"—the first volume, by the way, of a trilogy dealing with a Socialist novelist and Chicago industrialism.

Mr. Sherwood Anderson reached the age of thirty-five before he attempted to write a novel. Then he wrote it simply that he might create and live with a human being and know him as he could never do by observation or any real existence. He has had a varied career, first as a labourer, then a soldier in the Spanish-American war, and as a business man who was very successful—until he began writing! His third book, "Winesburg, Ohio," in which he tries to do for the small town what Caradoc Evans did for the Welsh village, and which brought him recognition, is his high-water mark; although "Poor White," a study of the talented son of a shiftless labourer at the moment of the industrial supremacy over agriculture, is one of the best works that have come of the Middle West. "Poor White" reveals the giant influence of the Russians. It has the bigness of prairies, the universality of the uprising spirit. Its unique technical feature is that dialogue is practically absent from it—certainly the pages are never broken up, except by the commencement of new, long paragraphs. The adolescence of Hugh McVey, the "poor white" labourer himself, and of Clara Butterworth, is exquisitely described. Here the author is a poet. His understanding of women is evidenced by his first portrait—that of Sarah Shepard, the woman who "mothered" Hugh and made him something more than a huge-limbed, sleepy animal. One of the events of our next season is promised in the publication of "Poor White" and "Winesburg, Ohio."

Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

Mr. Joseph Hergesheimer.

Mr. Jonathan Cape has recently published, in "Zell," by Henry G. Aikman (8s. 6d. net), another interesting story, and one of similar type. It is a big advance on Mr. Aikman's first novel, "The Groper," and Avery Zell's unhappy boyhood and ineffectual manhood are described in a grimly humorous vein that make the book one with a difference from most novels of our time. When Avery grows up he stumbles through many spiritual and material adventures until, baffled and resigned, he endeavours to find in his own son the projection of all he himself was, all he might have been, all he hoped to be. The personality of this rather fine though self-humiliated being is a triumph of characterisation; there is true humour in it, and pathos as proportionately true. The issue of Mr. Aikman's story in England is thoroughly justified. In him we have found a worthy member of the Hergesheimer line, and in "Zell" a successor, badly needed, of "Three Black Pennys" and "Java Head." He might also be read in contrast with the writings of Miss Evelyn Scott and Miss Dorothy Canfield, whose "Brimming Cup" (8s. 6d. net; Cape) is announced as the second "best-seller" of the season in America. From these two accomplished women writers we learn of a country that is young enough to be self-conscious and terrified at the thought of its own future, and yet old enough to be cynical and fiercely tenacious of its own birthright. Humour is a possession of neither. Nor do we find much in "Half-Loaves," by another young writer, Miss Margaret Culkin Banning (8s. 6d. net; Hodder & Stoughton), and yet there is sufficient of genuine understanding of men and women to make up for any lack of the other quality. Miss Banning's work might be compared with that of a young woman novelist on this side, Mrs. Beatrice Kean Seymour. She has the same power of describing minute details and making them significant, the same delicacy of sympathy with the men and women who, virtuous and well-intentioned, blunder through their early married years and well-nigh heap tragedy on the rest of their lives. The "half-loaf" is the pathetic remnant that, at best, is saved from those early experiences. Miss Banning's earlier book, "This Marrying," awakened an interest in her work that "Half-Loaves" has served to increase.

When we have named Mr. Sinclair Lewis, Mr. Sherwood Anderson, Miss Willa Cather and Mr. Floyd Dell, we have before us what are being called "The Big Four" in contemporary American prose, but it does not follow that the work outside theirs is insignificant. Apart from poets, but including the various kinds of prose writer, a good deal of interest is now centred in the production of Mr. Eugene O'Neill, whose grim little one-act play, "In the Zone," recently shown at Hampstead, is the forerunner of "Emperor Jones," to

Miss Margaret Culkin Banning.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

Mr. George Jean Nathan.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

Miss Willa Cather.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Miss Zona Gale.**

be staged in London this autumn. Mr. O'Neill is generally regarded as the most gifted of American drama writers; he has done much towards creating a new dramatic form. In this respect "Emperor Jones" is amazing. He is the first discovery of the Provincetown Players, a most successful group of travelling actors founded in 1914 by Mr. Floyd Dell and the late John Reed. Mr. A. E. Thomas is a playwriter less in control of his moods, and in some of them he manages to raise the ire of Mr. George Jean Nathan, one of the cleverest of the critics to whom reference will presently be made. The novels of Miss Zona Gale, always a sincere artist, are more familiar than most to English readers; and Mr. Christopher Morley seems to be making a particular corner for himself with bright and irresponsible work like "The Haunted Bookshop," published last year by Chapman & Hall, and "Parnassus on Wheels," now issued by Heinemann (5s. net).

Mr. James Branch Cabell and Mr. H. L. Mencken are writers of a totally different kind. Mr. Cabell is an urbane, ironical romanticist who persists in treating sex as a matter for buffoonery, and with "Jurgen," his most ambitious work, he succeeded last year in disturbing the "Comstocks," a term of contempt for the official societies for the "suppression of vice." "Jurgen" is to be issued shortly by John Lane. It stands with "Figures of Earth" as the most characteristic of Cabell's half-dozen novels. Its theme is the reaction of Jurgen (a mediæval pawnbroker) from the shrewishness of his wife, Dame Lisa. With the aid of a ghostly grandfather, magic robes and potions, he performs various miraculous feats, such as this:

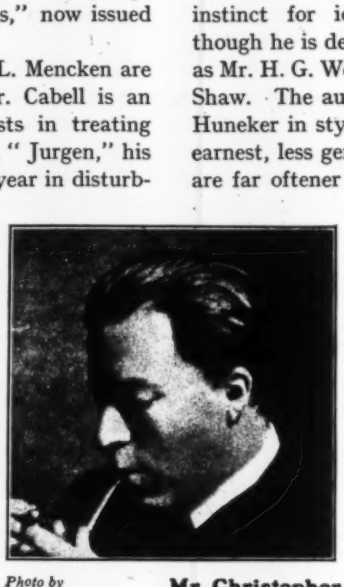


Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Christopher Morley.**

"Jurgen floated round his bed once or twice, then to the ceiling for practice. Through inexperience he miscalculated the necessary force, and popped into the room above."

It is the adventurous and gallant sequels to such unexpected moves that surprise the general reader and have made it a legal offence for the present to sell the book in the United States. Mr. Hugh Walpole is, we believe, to introduce Mr. Cabell to English readers. In a recent essay in the *Yale Review* Mr. Walpole stated that "no writer new to us in the last ten years has revealed in English so arresting a personality."

A brave fight against this tyrannical and always unjustifiable censorship of literature in Mr. Cabell's country is being made by Mr. H. L. Mencken, whose personality is for some readers more arresting even than that of the author of "Jurgen." America is at the present moment particularly well off as regards literary criticism, in spite of the plaint made by the best critics themselves that it is in a woeful state. Certainly the state of English criticism is not very happy by comparison. We have none to compare in fearlessness and positive judgment with Mr. G. J. Nathan or Mr. Mencken, none to compare with Mr. Francis Hackett and Mr. Van Wyck Brooks for earnest brilliance. We look for an English edition of Mr. Brooks's "Letters and Leadership," and, perhaps, his "Ordeal of Mark Twain" (a thoroughgoing upset, this, of a literary idol), now that Mr. Jonathan Cape has issued Mr. Mencken's first series of essays called "Prejudices." That this particular volume should have been chosen of his dozen to introduce him here is a wise judgment, for his peculiar instinct for idol-smashing is roundly shown, even though he is dealing with such awe-inspiring personages as Mr. H. G. Wells, Mr. Arnold Bennett and Mr. Bernard Shaw. The author has been likened to the late James Huneker in style and mind. But he is in more deadly earnest, less genial. On the other hand his judgments are far oftener artistically sound. His summing up of Mr. Bennett's qualities is excellently made; he gives literary credit to the late Jack London—always a test-case. He is ruthless with Sudermann as a dramatist:

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. H. L. Mencken.**

"He starts off furiously, let us say, as a Zola, and then dilutes Zolaism with romance, and then pulls himself up and begins to imitate Ibsen, and then trips himself up and falls headlong into the sugar-bowl of sentimentality."

And Mr. Bernard Shaw has made it his life-work to "announce the obvious in terms of the scandalous." America is fortunate in having one so stimulating and sincere as Mr. Mencken at a time when its literature is beginning to circulate in a general way beyond its own borders. He will, we feel confident, take good care that nothing is introduced over here without the hall-mark of genuine authorship or the dreaded label of those who, as he picturesquely puts it, are, "in spite of the pedagogical Prussianism of the Professors, *not* filled with the divine afflatus, nor nominated by the hierarchy of hell to enrich the literature of their fatherland." Enough has been said in the present essay to indicate how thoroughly genuine is much of American contemporary prose-writing that must pass under Mr. Mencken's examination, and, consequently, if our publishers continue in their present enterprising path, how welcome.

CLAUDE LOVAT FRASER.

By Holbrook Jackson.

THE death of Claude Lovat Fraser in his thirty-second year closes before it was fully opened to our view one of the most hopeful prospects of recent English art. But untimely as his death came in June last, and irreparable as his loss must be, he did something more than give us a glimpse of a happy, healthy realm of design and colour—he gave to us for an inheritance the right to enter his realm of fancy by many a bright and pleasing gateway.

His art touched life at many points, and although, whether it was painting or drawing, it fulfilled the demands of its own technique, he was not content that it should remain there. Lovat Fraser was something more than a painter of pictures, if indeed he ever was or could have been that for any length of time. His pictures were related to functions rather than frames. They were to be looked at, or better, to be *used* with something else—a book, a fabric, a costume, a play or a ballet. He was primarily and in the larger sense of the word a designer. Design in art is fitness to purpose. His short but full years of productivity were devoted entirely to fitting his art to any purpose that took his fancy or claimed his aid He had his own tastes and peculiar whims, but in spite of these, in spite of a very real tendency to linger in a particular period, a catholicity of sympathy encouraged him, when nothing more individual was pressing, to permit his tireless genius to serve any respectable purpose, whether it was the decoration of a book that was little more than trivial, the making of a toy, the designing of an advertisement, or, if there were nothing to do at all, the covering of the backs of envelopes or menu cards with caricatures of himself and his friends.

C. Lovat Fraser.

He could perform miracles likewise with the most unpretentious materials. With a steel nib or a quill pen and some twopenny bottles of red, green, violet and black writing inks he fashioned designs and pictures which bear the mark of immortality; with corrupt and out-moded types and printers' ornaments and packing papers so crude in colour as to be almost obscene, he called forth booklets which have entranced the fastidious bibliophile. He revelled in impossible materials and the results were always magical. I have known him to travel the bookshops of London for old MS. books for the sake of the hand-made paper golden with age; to hunt the East End for tattered broadsides and chap-books. He enjoyed and hoarded the crude designs on old-fashioned matchboxes and trade cards and the coloured sheets which formed the raw materials of toy theatres. He liked toys. Not modern mechanical toys; still less, gollywogs and teddy-bears; but the Dutch dolls, calico cats and wooden horses with impossible spots such as a Caleb Plummer might have created. And he would walk miles to see an inn sign of the genuine "Marquis of Granby" or "Blue Boar" class. The Punch and Judy show which used to appear like a ghost from the past on certain pre-war days in Charing Cross Road, near the National Portrait Gallery, was one of his great delights. He gloried in pirates and highwaymen, and knew the eighteenth century "literature" of these ruffians like an expert. One of his earliest drawings was a picture of Captain Macheath, and Lovat Fraser lived to design the scenery and costumes for the revival of "The Beggars' Opera."

But his taste was not confined to the art of the street folks. He knew better than anyone what was good, individual, characteristic, in the urbane plebeian; he knew also its affinities in patrician urbanities. I never heard him express enthusiasm for any of the pictures of the old masters, except Velasquez, Goya and Constable. He preferred their drawings, particularly their sketches. Watteau's sketches, and Rembrandt's, and Hogarth's, and more than all those of Rowlandson. He was always hunting for these and with a sort of instinct finding them, and once found not relinquishing his grip of his treasure if it cost him his last guinea—which it often did.

Costume also fascinated him. He chuckled with delight over the Regent and Beau Brummel and Beau Nash; knew as a boy of eighteen the difference between a "maccaroni" and a "buck"; hoarded old, coloured fashion engravings and military costume prints and even the costumes. He once invaded my room with a vast shako under his arm which he had tracked down in some old curiosity shop. He lived imaginatively in the period 1650–1800 with occasional excursions over the frontier of the early nineteenth century to do homage to Shelley and Keats. He loathed Harrogate and loved Bath.

When I first met him he was beginning to saturate himself in all these things; creating, as it afterwards appeared, an atmosphere, a locale, for his genius. I remember him first as a plump hobbledehoy from Charterhouse valiantly endeavouring to acquire law

From "The Lute of Love,"
An Anthology, with drawings and decorations by Lovat Fraser (Selwyn & Blount).

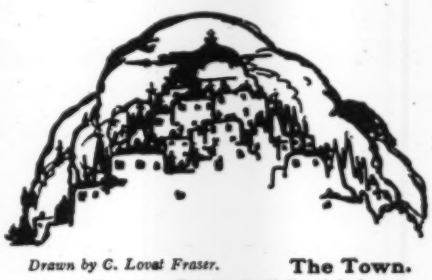
in his father's office and getting beaten handsomely every time. That was in 1909. Art won, and Lovat's gift for filling office note-paper, destined for legal formalities, with caricatures of himself and his friends, and portraits of pirates and dandies, was transferred to the studio of Walter Sickert. He enjoyed the change, as he enjoyed most things, but he did not let it interfere with his art. Lovat Fraser was not of the stuff out of which good students are made, whether law or art. He had his own way of working and stuck to it. He was self-taught. He did not resent criticism, at least he never showed resentment, but it had no effect upon him. At the back of his easy good nature and eloquent desire to please others, particularly his friends, there was firm conviction in his own mission and purpose and an utter determination to please himself. As a boy, with the spirit and playfulness of a boy, he was also a man—more than a man, he had the maturity of genius which is older than time. At the very outset he seemed to realise what was in him. He did not develop—he unfolded.

"Milk Below!"
From "A Collection of Nursery Rhymes." Illustrated by Lovat Fraser (Poetry Bookshop).

It was inevitable that he should have gravitated to the theatre. All the tastes and experiences which I have indicated were training for the setting of "The Beggars' Opera," "As You Like It," "If," and "Mary Stuart." The world was a stage for him and the men and women not *merely*, in Shakespeare's belittling phrase, but always and most appropriately, players. Lovat Fraser would not have had them otherwise. He played also, but not with them; except with his friends he was shy and remote. He played at watching them and drawing them or using them as the media of his art. But he played seriously—with the earnestness of a child. Which is only a roundabout way of saying that he lived in and for his work. He never stopped working except to sleep. His prodigality was startling. Every scrap of paper which came his way left him with distinction. His pen and pencil never rested. He would draw on the backs of envelopes before putting them in the post-box, and added a little floral decoration, sometimes in colour, or a miniature caricature of himself to his signature on post cards. His inscriptions in gift-books were nearly always pictorial. He was always on the look-out for models or subjects and always ready to talk about his work.

By C. Lovat Fraser. **Wrapper Design.**
From "Strange Meetings" by Harold Monro (Poetry Bookshop), reviewed in this Number.

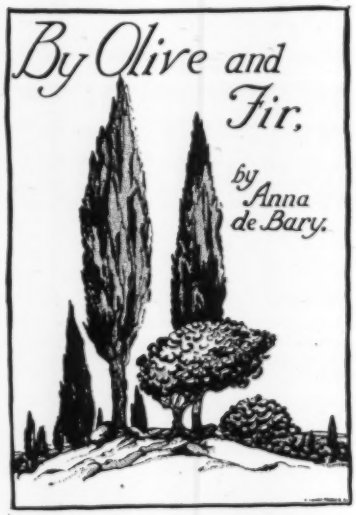
In this spirit of play or joyful work he lived. Thus were the "Flying Fame" chapbooks and broadsides produced, and "Pirates with a Foreword and Sundry Decorations" and anthologies such as "The Lute of Love" and books of verse such as "Helicon Hill." Thus also came forth the early caricatures, the massed colour schemes of his pictorial work, and finally the recent stage settings which in less than three years gave him a European reputation.



Drawn by C. Lovat Fraser. **The Town.**
From "Town," an Essay. By Holbrook Jackson. (At the Sign of the Flying Fame).

From "The Lute of Love,"
An Anthology with drawings and decorations by Lovat Fraser (Selwyn & Blount).

There was only one sad period in his life, only one period when he could not play his entrancing game. During the war his pens and brushes, inks and pigments were laid by for sterner implements and materials. Not entirely laid by, however, for even in the trenches under fire he found paper and crayons and bombarded his friends with the results in vivid war sketches which are among his best work. He bore the actual fighting better than the training, and although he set his teeth to see it through and even made gruesome incidents the subject of his delicious humour, this time with a grimness very foreign to him, it was with undisguised relief that he returned after the battle of Loos, shattered in nerves as he was, almost sole survivor after an explosion which annihilated his company. He never really



Cover Design
(reduced)
From "By Olive and Fir," a new novel by Anna de Bary (Daniel O'Connor).

recovered from those momentous experiences, and the fatal termination of his last illness was as surely due to the war as though he had died on the field. Had the latter happened, Lovat Fraser, the artist of the theatre, would have been unknown, but Lovat Fraser, the creator of a new design that was as old and as English as England, would not readily have been for gotten.

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

AUGUST, 1921.

Answers to these competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 14th of the month to

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

Colonial and foreign readers please note that Competitions II, IV and V are the same each month, and that for the next two months the first prize will be for the best original lyric.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—*Competitors must please keep copies of their verses; the Editor cannot undertake to return them.*

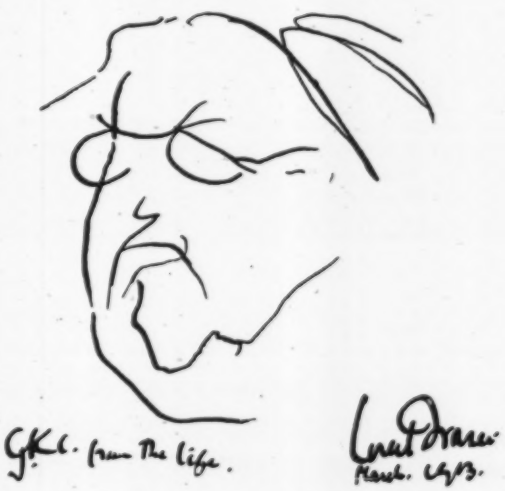
I.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best *original* lyric.

II.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

III.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best design in colour or black-and-white for the Autumn Double Number of THE BOOKMAN. The design should suggest the bookish character of the magazine and, if possible, the season; but competitors are warned against being tempted by fancies of an old gentleman reading who, without this warning, would probably get into the drawings of too many of them.

IV.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best review, in not more than one hundred words, of any recently published book. Competitors should give the names of Authors and Publishers at head of review.

V.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.



Mr. G. K. Chesterton.
From a caricature by C. Lovat Fraser.
Lent by Mr. Holbrook Jackson.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR JULY.

I.—The PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA for the best original lyric is awarded to Rachael Bates, of The Orchard, Victoria Road, Great Crosby, Liverpool, for the following:

THE COAT OF MANY COLOURS.

I am the fool with raiment of gold,
I am the beggar with golden cloak;
This, though it shield not from the cold,
This, though it tarnish in the smoke
And rust in every whispering rain,
Dearer than all things else I hold
And may not loose again.

Under the hedges I lie at night,
The sharp wind biting, the cold rain falling—
But queens are riding in green and white
On steeds of silver, and kings are calling
Sweeter, clearer than common folk,
"Put on, put on your golden cloak,
Your cloak of gold most marvellous,
And ride with us!"

Under the hedges I wake at dawn,
Drenched with dew and faint with hunger;
I watch the gipsies flatter and fawn
And hear the needy ballad-monger
Selling the passionate words o' the dead
For bitter wine and mouldering bread.
But for myself I ever said
That I would liefer starve, or choke
On a wisp of straw, than sell my cloak.

Sir Hall Caine.
From a caricature by C. Lovat Fraser.
Lent by Mr. Holbrook Jackson.

The kings of Orient, did they guess
The worth of it, would surely come
With shrilling trumpet and rolling drum
To trade my banner of loveliness;
For this is the cloth the faeries drew
From sun and moon and the morning's light,
Whereof each fold is sewn with dew
And thick with stars on a starless night.

This is the cloth the faeries wove
Of laughter and many-coloured words—
Who wears it hears the hidden birds
And knows the speechless thought of love.
For this, when I go past the towns,
The maids come out in jest and joke
And pester me with silver crowns
To let them wear my golden cloak.

But in my heart I ever said
Such commerce brings no certain good,
And only one belovéd head
Shall nest within the shining hood,
One slender body know the spread
Of crystal fringe and starry fold—
Wherefore I come by waste and wold
To wrap you in my cloak of gold!

We also select for printing:

"CHANSON TRISTE."

I cannot sleep to-night, because
Across the road a woman sings,
An ancient song of love and peace,
A haunting melody that clings.

Why should her singing make me sad
And drive me to the verge of tears?
Ah! there is foolishness in youth,
And bitter paying with the years.

(R. Fortescue Doria, 6, Hatherly Place, St. Stephen's Road, Cheltenham.)

THE SINGER.

Little girl with the gift of song—
Bird-like song and burthen of joy,
Touch me now with your lyric voice
And I shall be once more a boy

And in a world of things grown old,
A dumb, grey world where is no ruth,
The sunrise days shall flaunt their gold
And my blood stir with laughing youth.

(S. G. August, Invercargill, New Zealand.)

THE WEAVER.

All the day long, and every day,
In fog or in sunlight, in gold or in grey,
I weave for my living, down Southwark way:
But at night I weave my dreams.

Cloth for the merchant, and cloth for the maid,
Broadcloth and taffeta, silk and brocade;—
Many have laboured ere one is arrayed:
But alone I weave my dreams.

Starlight and firelight, laughter and tears,
Gleaming desires and shadowy fears;
Words half remembered, from far-away years:
Of such I weave my dreams.

Now, when the darkness is kindly and deep,
Now, when the moon is atop Heaven's steep,
Some go to slumber, and some go to weep;—
But I go home to my dreams.

(Katharine I. Monro, St. Michael's Rectory, Lewes.)

We select for special commendation the lyrics by G. Laurence Groom (Regent's Park), Lucy Malleson (West Kensington), C. A. Macartney (Vienna), Edward S. Burnham (Eastbourne), H. B. (Brussels), Agnes Dewar Scott (Woolwich), Gwendolyn Wilkinson (Kensington), Alice W. Linford (London, N.), Vivien Ford (Bristol), Phyllis Erica Noble (Walthamstow), Adelaide King (Zurich, Switzerland), Adrian Heard (Parkstone), Peter Milne (Glasgow), Ruth Bevan (Bude), Thomas E. Kinna (Port Elizabeth), Marjorie Crosby (Wolverhampton), E. R. Faraday (Orleton), Constance M. Parnell (Leeds), K. P. Avasia (Bombay), Rita Klein (Manchester), Una Malleson (Kensington), Kathleen Ida Noble (Walthamstow), A. A. M. B. (Hampstead), James Paton (Pietermaritzburg), E. G. M. (Wimbledon), W. A. G. Kemp (Northwood), Anita Burnett (London, W.), K. M. Harvey (Oundle), Lettie Cole (Pontrilas), Cecil Thomas (Quetta), Doris Westwood (Sutton Coldfield), Winnifred Tasker (Llandudno), Ian Lauderdale (Cape Town), Margaret Brown (Putney), J. A. B. (Highgate), A. L. Pearce (Sydenham), J. O. Peek (Lafayette, U.S.A.), Maud Slessor (Rottingdean), G. A. Renshaw (Sheffield), Eileen Newton (Whitby), C. P. Y. Dawe (Montreal), Rose Purchas (Victoria), Caroline Kershaw (Lincoln), James R. Bennett (Hull), W. Robertson (Glasgow), Helen de Veer (Strasburg, Alsace).

II.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best quotation is awarded to the Rev. F. Hern, of Rowlands Castle, Hants, for the following:

WAYFARERS IN ARCADY. By CHARLES VINCE. (Philip Allan.)
"The lunatic, the lover, and the poet."
SHAKESPEARE, *A Midsummer Night's Dream, V*, 1.

We also select for printing:

HOW TO GET MARRIED. By E. MONTALE. (The World Press.)
"Put up the banns."
"Sir Ruperi the Fearless," Ingoldsby Legends.

(Annie A. Robinson, 3, Penn Lea Road, Weston, Bath.)

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED AT PARIS. (Hodder & Stoughton.)
"'Why, that I cannot tell,' said he."
SOUTHEY, *The Battle of Blenheim.*

(E. Theodora Herrington, The School House, Sacombe, Ware, Herts.)

MY THREE HUSBANDS. (Methuen.)
"Come, let us four to dinner."
SHAKESPEARE, 1 *Henry VI, II*, 4.

(Grace Murby, 22, Arundel Gardens, W.11.)

THE GLORIOUS HOPE. By JANE BURR. (Duckworth.)
"I'm off at eight to-morrow morn
To bring *such* fishes back!"
CHARLES KINGSLEY, *The South Wind.*

(A. S. Barnard, Monsall Lodge, Prestwich, Lancs.)

MOSTLY ABOUT TROUT. By SIR GEORGE ASTON. (Allen & Unwin.)
"I cannot say how the truth may be."
SCOTT, *Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

(Sidney S. Wright, 171, Widmore Road, Bromley, Kent.)

IV.—The PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS for the best epigram on any public man is awarded to Charles H. Cuddy, of 8, Stanley Avenue, Birkdale, Lancs, for the following:

TO LORD NORTHCLIFFE.

Great source of all that journalistic light
Whose daily circulation ever climbs:
How hard to picture you a Carmelite,
Dwelling persistently behind *The Times!*

By C. Lovat Fraser. **Decoration.**
From "Rhyme Sheet." Second Series (Poetry Bookshop).

The results in this Competition have been satisfactory in quantity but not in quality. The best of the many other epigrams received are by S. M. Isaacson (London, W.), Victor S. Pritchett (Paris), John A. Bellchambers (Highgate), M. McDonnell (Lancaster), R. B. Lawrence (Hendon), Mannington Sayers (Totnes), W. Sutherland (Sunderland), W. Swayne Little (Dublin), Richard Tucker (Tavistock), Maude R. Fleeson (Manchester), Mabel Westby-Nunn (Cheltenham).

IV.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best review is awarded to Frederick Willmer, of Rose Lea, Mayhill, Ramsey, Isle of Man, for the following:

THE ROMANCE OF HIS LIFE, AND OTHER ROMANCES. By MARY CHOLMONDELEY. (John Murray.)

A collection of eight short stories is given here, together with a delightful introduction, "In Praise of a Suffolk Cottage," which is by no means the least noteworthy contribution to the book. The plots are in romantic vein, and are remarkable for strength and originality. In one tale the reader is given an impression of prevailing social conditions in this country forty years hence, and in another Miss Cholmondeley writes, with humorous irony, on the status of the male in the year 2000. The book is in every way worthy of the author of "Red Pottage."

We also select for printing:

THE INCREDIBLE HONEYMOON. By E. NESBIT. (Hutchinson.)

By herself using the term "incredible" the author forestalls—and disarms—the reader's inevitable criticism of this surprising honeymoon. The impossibility once admitted, one is free to enjoy the charming company of the open-handed Edward, his Princess, and that strenuous animal, Charles, in their delightfully aimless wanderings. This sort of book has been frequently done—if not overdone—lately, but E. Nesbit's light and humorous touch just saves the syrupy flavour from becoming too cloying. Perhaps the most "incredible" effect is that created by Edward's apparently unlimited supply of sovereigns: one wonders where he succeeded in obtaining them.

(B. Noël Saxelby, 43, Claude Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester.)

THROUGH JOHN'S EYES. By HUNTLY ROBERTSON. (Grant Richards.)

This is undoubtedly a masterly and intensely interesting psychological study. It begins with the chaotic thoughts of a child of three, and carries through to the more orderly and comprehensive mental processes of a boy in the early teens. We see the world as he sees it; and we are led tantalisingly near the truth about many interesting problems, only to be baulked by a child's limited capacity for solving them. Moreover, the author is guiltless of the common crime of schoolboy story-tellers, for there is no false sentimentality to spoil the book.

(A. Smith, 85B, Lexham Gardens, S.W.5.)

A PATRIOT OF FRANCE. By MICHAEL W. KAYE. (Stanley Paul.)

A thrilling tale of the French Revolution. Jacques de Marignan, an amiable aristocrat, becomes involved in plots to free the King. Neither Jacques nor his lady-love is clever; but both are good and innocent, and fall into the toils of an incredibly wicked and beautiful baronne who, finding her passion for Jacques unrequited, determines to destroy him and her rival. General Dumourier acts nobly throughout and ultimately, after many stirring exploits and hairbreadth escapes, Madame la Guillotine and the wicked baronne are cheated of their prey. We follow Jacques' fortunes in breathless haste until the exciting climax.

(J. C. Scott, "Braemar," Charlton Kings, Cheltenham.)

We specially commend the reviews by Violet E. Adeard (Upper Tooting), Gertrude Pitt (London, N.), Alice E. Oldacre (Stoke-on-Trent), W. L. Werner (London, E.C.), Winifred M. Davies (Brynmawr), George Winter (Southend), Enid Blyton (Beckenham), Sydney S. Wright (Bromley), Samuel Holt (Portsmouth), Edward K. Warren (Bedford), David Scales (Penge), R. B. Harris (Melbourne), L. Jones (Cardiff), Horace Petherick (Carlisle).

V.—The PRIZE OF ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE BOOKMAN for the best suggestion is awarded to Ernest A. Fuller, 10, The Circus, Greenwich, S.E.10.

THE FORMULA OF THE WESTERN NOVEL.

From a Paper read before the American Library Association.

By WILLIAM MACLEOD RAINE.

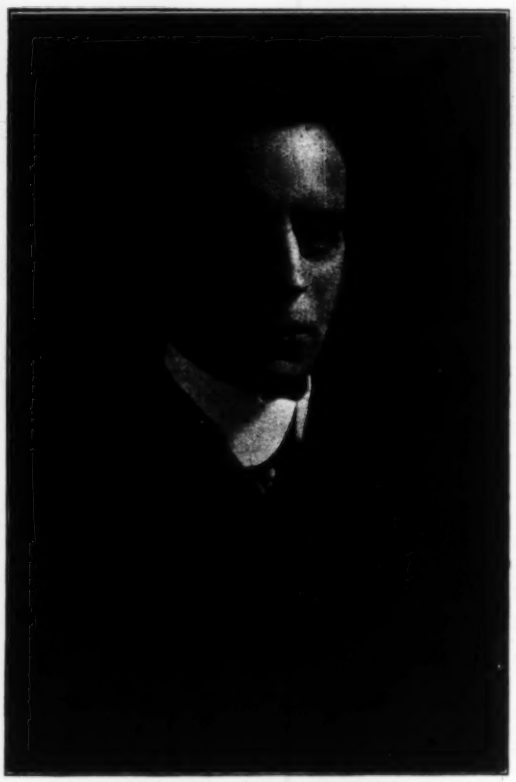
THE Western novel, one gathers from its critics, is in a parlous condition. It has become a thing of rule and rote, formula-built, a bit of carpenter work prepared from plans and specifications that have been standardised like Edison's concrete house.

This is a definite enough complaint, and it has its just weight. A writer in a recent magazine suggests that a certain very popular author—who by the way lives in the West—probably labels his characters courage, meanness, piety, suspicion, ignorance, etc., and gives them personal names only after his story is finished. Perhaps. I don't know his methods, but very likely he relies on the fact that most of us are alike as God's little apples. The great reading public is confused by subtleties and resents them.

The tremendous popularity of the formula-constructed novel is a source of continual surprise and sometimes despair to those of cultivated taste. It need not be a surprise. Writers who have had their work presented through the medium of the moving picture know how inevitably the fineness is worked out of the characters and the personality out of the story. The whole thing is standardised. For the motion picture producer has discovered that the public wants the commonplace.

It thrills to simple elemental emotions presented without refinement of motive. So the commonplace writer —*sans* style, taste, ideas, subtlety, or truth to life—dealing with elementals in an elemental way, appeals to the big reading audience.

Our eccentricities and our individualities are trifling compared with our conformities. The tendency of a highly complicated society is to iron out, on the surface, these differences. On certain occasions we all wear the same kind of clothes. The mediocre writer, slenderly equipped for his business, unable to probe far below the surface, often harks back to a more primitive society with its less specialised types. His alternative is to treat a highly synthesised social condition so superficially as to ignore its difficulties.



Mr. William MacLeod Raine.

To such writers the West is a tempting field. Its winning is one of the world's great epical themes. From all states and nations its builders poured, young, ardent, hopeful, strong. Round the Horn in clipper ships, across the fever-swept Isthmus, by the long, dusty Overland Trail, they came into the Golden West to seek fortune. They laughed at hardship. They wrote songs of defiance to bad luck and sang them while they toiled and starved and died. Self-contained and confident, they gutted mountains, made deserts leafy green, built cities that were the marvel of their generation. They tramped with audacious hope over new, dim trails to fell forests and drive the ploughshare through the sod of unbroken prairies. Into the Great American Desert, as the geographers called it, strode the pick of the world's adventurous youth and were swallowed up by it.

The building of the West is an absorbing subject, broad and elemental enough to capture the brave imagination of the young. The canvas is a big one. If the finished picture is tawdry, lacks depths, or fails to show an illusion of life, the artist must be to blame.

In the flood of Western novels there are some which contain a good deal of obvious carpenter work, a good many strained situations, much unreality. Some show characteristics rather than character in action. It may be confessed that the Western novel is usually more naïve, lacks brilliancy of style, often displays no deep insight, and has no background of culture. In the West we live too much in a concrete world. The importance of character study is undervalued.

But can we fairly localise these generalisations? Are feebleness of imagination, aridity of observation and lack of originality the peculiar defects of writers who deal with the West?

The writer of Western fiction offers one suggestion in his defence. There is a tradition of Western fiction from which it is hard to escape. He is not wholly his own master. If he were to write a story of how Hans Ukena raised peas and lettuce on a five-acre irrigated patch and thought of wooing Frieda Reincke with onions and cabbages instead of Cherokee roses and Lowney's chocolates, but decided after reflection to remain a bachelor, his audience would dwindle, his publishers might protest. Certainly his car would go gasless.

When all is said, art is not sectional. The standard of literary judgment lies in certain enduring principles that have come to common acceptance. These apply equally to all fiction, no matter where its setting. There is in all genuine fiction a sense of life, a human quality expressed in terms of the writer's personal philosophy. That which lifts a novel out of the commonplace is the personality of the writer. A novel is an individual impression of life, is the product of a man's reaction toward it. It is based upon ideas about life. If these run in a groove it is because the writer's thinking has become standardised. A writer may plough through his theme without learning or style or even good taste, but ideas of some sort he must have. To express the beautiful, to show the good: these are more important than technique. For life after all is bigger than art. The fit and striking work is all very well, but many a man has had a very pretty style with nothing of value to wrap up in it.

The most engaging quality in fiction is freshness. Those of us who are fencing with the encroaching years recall the tremendous sensation of Kipling's literary arrival, due more than to any other single factor to the new note he had struck. Now freshness must be born of a mind that gets new angles on life, of a man with bubbles in the brain, as some one has put it. His eyes must see and his pen interpret human experience in terms of his own personality. Most of us see only the obvious. We miss the significance of human action. A story is much more likely to touch us to tears than the lives about us. We lay stress on the wrong things and do not get right relations. It is, comparatively speaking, unimportant how we translate the material world, which is a more or less static thing, even though it may be a living stream issuing from the primal cosmic energy, even though it too struggles with nature and is affected by contingency. But human nature is dynamic. The ideas behind it express themselves subtly in motion, inflections, cadences of the voice, flashes of the eye.

It is a characteristic of the formula-built novel that of its very nature freshness must be lacking. For freshness is of the spirit. It springs from personality. The poor jerry-built Western novel, with its paraphernalia of chaps and cowboys and Indians and six-guns, with its dreadful humour of misspelt words and oaths and bad grammar, cannot by any chance have the freshness that comes from original observation, genuine insight, and feeling for truth. But you will find that freshness in the short stories of Peter Kyne and Manlove Rhodes. You will find it in Wister's "Virginian" and Stewart Edward White's "Arizona Nights." You will find it in Caroline Lockhart's "Me Smith" and in Frank Spearman's "Whispering Smith."

The principal change in the novel during recent years, as I find it, is that it relates itself closer to the social order, and in that respect has become more highly synthesised. George Eliot does not appear to have been moved by the modern spirit of unrest. She was Victorian completely. Her characters were in that condition of society in which it had pleased God to put them. If they reacted against this they were rebels. Even Thackeray, whose keen analytical mind must have given him many doubts of the social structure, shows us life on the whole as an individual struggle. Not so with the modern. The life of the community is no longer only a background for the characters. It is the thing that shapes them, drives them, dwarfs them, educates them, and swallows them up. The characters are merely expressions of this life. As we read of Mr. Polly, for instance, or of the Forsytes, we are impressed by the feeling that they are individuals struggling in the current of an environment altogether too strong. In the earlier novelists the framework of their philosophy was traditional. The moderns are idol smashers. If Thackeray was a novelist of manners and George Eliot of character, as has been said, then Wells, we may add, is a novelist of ideas. He is one of the originators of the novel of ideas, a new departure in the field.

One complaint of the critics is that the Western novel has no social consciousness. It has not a great deal. That is true. Neither had "the beautiful bare narrative of Robinson Crusoe," as Lamb calls it, yet to this day we devour it with delight. The novel of adventure and the novel of character are distinct achievements. It is easy to be rather scornful of the novel in which the characters move rapidly and with energy to their appointed destinies. Yet the tale of action is in itself as worthy as the story of ideas. It may just as truly reveal the springs that move to action, may just as finely show the characters betraying themselves in deeds as another type of fiction shows them betraying themselves in words. "The Sheriff of Badger" (Pattullo) is as true to life as "Mr. Polly" (Wells). Eugene Manlove Rhodes's Jeff Bransford is as much a product of his environment as Bennett's Denry and is much less a *jeu d'esprit.*

The insatiable demand for the Western story finds its spring in the imagination of the readers. The West is the home of romance. The clerk picks up a stirring tale of tangled trails and his own drab life vanishes. He too is walking the edge of that dangerous cliff, a target for the bullets of the rifles in the valley far below. He too gallops across the prairie with the heroine, the sun in his eyes and the wind in his face. It is the same with the schoolboy. His eyes are on the algebra in front of him, but his thoughts are far afield. He is creeping through Twin Buttes Notch with Yorky to see the rustlers drive the stolen herd south.

If I have seemed to talk a good deal about life in connection with the novel it is because life is of the very warp and woof of it. The novel must have the very colour of life. Nothing less will do to make of it a vital thing. Except in the case of a fantasy, a pure romance, or a mystery story, this illusion of life must be sustained. A factory-made novel, turned out by machinery, cannot possibly stand the acid test.

But in this the Western novel is not in a class by itself. It must be judged by the same standards as the novel of the East or of the South, of Paris, or Boston, or London. In so far as it is a true picture of life it succeeds. Where it misses truth it fails.

New Books.

MOLIÈRE.*

Those who like reading about French literature already know Mr. Tilley of King's as a guide, philosopher and friend. To many excellent volumes of history and criticism he has recently added a delightful anthology, "Cambridge Readings in French Literature" (in which I feel a brotherly interest), containing excellently chosen and subtly arranged passages, ranging from Villon and Rabelais to Péguy and Pétain, with pictures interspersed, the whole forming a perfect volume for the boat or the bedside, the chair or the hills, or wheresoever else one wants reading that is varied and "tasty" and not tyrannously continuous. This he has now followed with a volume on Molière, which seems to me just the very book English readers have been waiting for. I say "seems to me," because I take myself as the average sort of reader who likes French literature, but whose acquaintance with French literary history is small, and who is glad therefore of some one to place the works he reads in due relation to the author's life and the circumstances of his time. Tartuffe, like Pecksniff, is an eternal criticism of life; but his artistic effect is deepened when we learn that he is also a criticism of the seventeenth century society of prudes on the prowl known officially as La Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement and popularly as La Cabale des dévots.

Mr. Tilley's volume is arranged in a dozen chapters, the first and longest of which is a clear and adequate sketch of Molière's life. The second shows him at work upon experiments and struggling with the social and artistic difficulties that beset the stage of his day. Eight chapters are devoted to an elaborate discussion of the plays in detail, and the volume concludes with two essay-chapters on comedy and the general tendency of Molière's contribution to that humane activity. The reader will find it, as I said, the best possible companion to the plays, and its careful

* "Molière." By Arthur Tilley, M.A. 12s. 6d. net. (Cambridge University Press.)

documentation will enable him to pursue any topic that specially attracts him.

A book that helps to make more readers of Molière in England deserves commendation, for Molière is the one great dramatist of France whom English people can accept without reserve or difficulty. Indeed, he was soon acclimatised here, for our Restoration dramatists plundered him ruthlessly. A volume of Morley's excellent old Universal Library contains a number of plays adapted from Molière; but several volumes would be necessary to contain the plays suggested by him. His English imitators took from him all they could; but what they could not take is precisely that which makes him part of the radiant, universal comedy of the world. As well try to steal the spirit of Mozart as the spirit of Molière!

A comparison between, say, Wycherley's "The Plain Dealer" and "Le Misanthrope," from which it is adapted, is worth making, because it will show the reader the incomparable superiority of Molière to his imitators, not only in spirit, but technically as a dramatist. His perfect, effortless command of the art theatrical seems to me one of the miracles of literature. In England Shakespeare had the same great gift; but one wants to keep Shakespeare's name out of this story, because Shakespeare had so much else besides that his mighty spirit would only trouble us here. The one other great creative artist who occurs to me as a companion is the one already cited—Mozart. Turn to the sestet in "Don Giovanni" beginning "Sola, sola in bujo loco," or to the great finale of the first act and, having properly admired the exquisite, inexhaustibly delightful musical art of these great numbers, consider next how dramatically alive they are. The finale is the perfection of "situation" as well as the perfection of concerted music; the sestet is the perfection of stage comedy as well as the perfection of part-writing. Molière, like Mozart, is always going on.

Even in an early play like "L'Etourdi," thin stuff as it is—the mere diagram of a farce, one might call it—how the whole thing keeps moving! Perhaps one of the greatest tributes to Molière's perfect touch and sense of dramatic fitness is the fact, of which Mr. Tilley reminds us, that in 1877 the Comédie-Française gave a revival of "George Dandin"—that tragic farce of marriage—played seriously, with no less a man than Got as George Dandin. It was a complete failure and was withdrawn after the second night. The substance of the play seems tragic enough, and the unhappy husband's now proverbial cry of the heart is almost terrible in its universal application to our follies; but the simple fact is that Molière wrote the piece in the key of farcical comedy and in that key alone can it be played. George Dandin is the dupe of farce, not the sufferer of tragedy; and so exactly right is the master's touch that only in farce is Dandin moving. Taken seriously he is beneath contempt.

One of the consolations of middle age is that one can remember Coquelin in Molière. The most popular of his performances was the double bill of "Tartuffe" and "Les Précieuses Ridicules." Of the last-named gem of extravagant comedy I will say no more than that I still have a printed copy of the French and English text as sold at the St. James's Theatre where Coquelin and Jane Hading were playing together, and in that copy the title is translated "The Precious Ridiculous"! "Tartuffe" always seems to me consoling. Pecksniff might have made us think that we had in England a monopoly of that sort of thing; Tartuffe reminds us that the sanctimonious humbug is ubiquitous. The history of the play is interesting, but too long to relate here. One point, however, deserves notice. Molière's exposure of religious hypocrisy drew upon him the shocked indignation of the Church. The Archbishop of Paris denounced the piece as a dangerous play calculated to injure religion; and thereupon issued a decree forbidding, under pain of excommunication, all persons in his diocese to represent, read or hear read, either in public or in private, this pernicious comedy. But even the Archbishop was outdone by Pierre Roullé, one of the Paris clergy, who with delightful Christian and clerical charity denounced Molière as "un démon vêtu de chair et habillé en homme, un libertin, un impie digne d'un supplice exemplaire." So you see, as Harry Paulton used to say in a farcical comedy (not by Molière), "They were the same in the old days."

GEORGE SAMPSON.

G. B. S.*

Mr. Shaw has become an Institution. People have made up their minds about him, and you know beforehand what nearly all the critics will say of any new book he may write. Praise and censure are of no more importance to him than they are to the Nelson Column or the Albert Memorial. Neither praise nor censure adds anything to or takes anything from his reputation; for those who admire him continue to do so in spite of the one, and those who do not admire him are not to be converted by the other.

There are obvious advantages in becoming an Institution; and obvious disadvantages. Already "Back to Methuselah" has been eulogised by those whom we expected to eulogise it, and roughly handled by those whom we expected to handle it roughly. It has all happened as mechanically as if a usual result had been obtained by turning a handle. When things arrive at this pass criticism ceases to be of much value either to the reader or the author, and I have no doubt Mr. Shaw, being the shrewd humorist he is, laughs up his sleeve both at his worshippers and the ungodly.

On the whole it seemed worth while trying to read "Back to Methuselah" as if it were a new book by a new writer. It was impossible that such an experiment should be carried through quite successfully, especially by one who admires Mr. Shaw, this side idolatry, as much as do any of his admirers. But something might be gained by making the attempt, and anyhow I have made it.

I have always felt there must be something wrong with a play that needs a preface to explain it. "Back to Methuselah" fully explains itself, therefore the preface is an excrescence. Nevertheless it is an excellent preface as well as a long one. It discusses the virtue of education, Darwinianism, the Lamarckian philosophy, religion, socialism, the principle of heredity, and a number of things, as brilliantly as Mr. Shaw has discussed them and other matters in any preface he has written. I am not sure that the preface is not even cleverer than the play—or series of plays—that follows it; that it is not a too portentous portico for the witty, satirical fantasies, the mingling of quaint humour, ironic seriousness and broad farce upon which it opens.

This series of five plays, as Mr. Shaw suggests, is a dramatic parable of Creative Evolution; but the writer could have written it and the reader can read it understandingly without any exhaustive acquaintance with that science. The first play, "In the Beginning," lays its first scene in the Garden of Eden, with Adam and Eve and the Serpent, and retells that story of the fall of man which is not countenanced by any evolutionary theory. The second scene shows you Adam and Eve a few centuries later, exiled from the Garden, and introduces Cain shortly after he has murdered Abel. The next play, "The Gospel of the Brothers Barnabas," is of the present day. Franklyn Barnabas is an ex-churchman who has come to the conclusion that "life is too short for men to take it seriously," and his brother Conrad is a professor of biology. Franklyn believes in the Garden of Eden origin of life, and to that extent excuses the anomalous teaching of the first play; Conrad places that tale of the origin "outside Science," but both of them are convinced that longer life is necessary to the salvation of mankind, and that if men can once be made to feel the urge of that necessity and develop a will to live longer, there is nothing to prevent them from living for at least three hundred years. The entry of the present Premier and the ex-Premier, under thin disguises; their

* "Back to Methuselah: A Metabiological Pentateuch." By Bernard Shaw. 10s. (Constable.)

exposition of the modern political outlook, and the resolution of the more enterprising of the two to "work this stunt" and make a political war-cry of the doctrine of the Brothers Barnabas, is all done with masterly cunning in a delightfully burlesque spirit of satirical comedy.

In "The Thing Happens: A.D. 2170," there are two survivors who have put the Barnabas theory into practice. "Tragedy of an Elderly Gentleman: A.D. 3000" is a less successful interlude which shows Great Britain inhabited by people who live through the centuries, and a visiting deputation from Mesopotamia, which is now the centre of the British Empire. And, to conclude, "As Far as Thought can Reach: A.D. 31,920," presents a world in which everybody lives to an incredible age, a sort of machine-made Arcadian life in which men and women seem to be about as mechanical in structure and conduct as things turned out by a factory.

If Mr. Shaw's aim was to drive home the moral that longer lives would not mean happier lives, he has done it. Better seventy years of present-day existence than a cycle or two of the ideal life he imagines for us in the future. It would bore most of us to extinction long before we had endured even the first hundred years of it. But the lesson does not matter; he is so seldom serious, so flippant, so whimsically, extravagantly irresponsible in some of his jesting that I doubt whether he intended to teach any. The idea of what an abnormal lengthening of life might mean to humanity appealed to him, and he has worked it out in these dramas with a skill, a devastating wit and cleverness that may not please the earnest disciple of Creative Evolution, but their laughing philosophy, their biting comment on human weaknesses, and their overflowing humour of character and dialogue will keep the average intelligent reader immensely entertained.

A.

ANDERS ZORN.*

The late Anders Zorn, who died last August at the age of sixty, is one of the few modern artists of whom it may be truly said that he had an international reputation. A Swede in nationality, his fame soon spread from Scandinavia through Northern Europe, and for the last decade his work has been eagerly collected not only in London, Paris and New York, but even in the nearer and Far East. Since the armistice a canny Scot, residing within a hundred miles of Glasgow, is reputed to have made considerable sums by buying Zorn etchings in Vienna and selling them in Japan. It would be difficult to name another modern artist whose work could successfully be made the subject of similar operations.

"The Letter" (1913).

From "Anders Zorn." (*Studio.*)

What is the quality in Zorn's work that has given him this amazing popularity that crosses all frontiers? It is always difficult to account for the vogue of a painter, and it is not always merit alone that makes a man a fashion. The secret perhaps is that Zorn succeeded, as Rubens succeeded, by reason of his exuberant vitality. There are no philosophical depths in the works either of the Old Master or the Modern, but there is a tremendous and consummate expression of the joy of life on the physical plane. Since philosophy is never really popular, but the joys of physical well-being are immediately appreciated, a Rubens always becomes popular much sooner than a Rembrandt.

Zorn was the most successful exploiter of the nude in modern times. He worked in many media—painting, etching, sculpture—but his favourite theme was always the same, the beauty unadorned of women, of women bathing, of women wandering like dryads through the woods, of women preparing for the intimacies of the toilet at home, but always of women whose iridescent flesh tints are illumined by gleams of sunlight. He did not treat the human figure in a romantic or idealist manner; he was essentially a realist who aimed at presenting the truth of appearances, and in his endeavour to be actual he sometimes shocked us by his lack of taste. Take, for example, his notorious painting, "Naked," of 1904, which Dr. Karl Asplund correctly describes as a picture in which

* "Anders Zorn: His Life and Work." By Dr. Karl Asplund. £3 3s. (*The Studio*, Ltd.)

"a grotesquely built, coarse, fat, red-haired woman is standing n a room in bright daylight, drying herself after her bath. It is a challenge of coarse realism, but seldom has such a *motif* been so ennobled in the execution."

Here we tread on controversial ground. Can noble execution ever justify an ignoble theme? We may admit that the end justifies the means, but who save a fanatic for pedantic technicalities will ever seriously maintain that the means justify the end? It is the preposterous assertion that fine drawing and beautiful colouring may be used for any mean and paltry purpose that has rightly brought modern painting into general contempt. However great his gifts may be, an artist who parades his drawing, his design, his brush-work and his sense of colour, not to express a noble emotion or a generous thought, but to impress beholders with his own cleverness, that man does not achieve a real work of art; he merely completes an exercise. It is the persistent exposure of these empty exercises that has wearied the public with exhibitions of modern art.

To some extent, it must be feared, Zorn was a virtuoso of art. He was at his best in portraiture, and it is on the portraits, whether painted or etched, in which he forgot himself in his reverence for his sitter, that his fame is most securely founded. His early oil portrait of Coquelin is one of his best paintings, and his etched portrait of Renan is his supreme masterpiece. It is a pleasure to find these two works (and many others) splendidly reproduced in the handsome volume just published by *The Studio*. The etching of Anatole France, though interesting, is less good than the Renan and curiously enough is less expressive than Chahine's etched portrait, though Chahine's powers as an etcher are vastly inferior to those of Zorn; and a comparison of the two plates helps us to realise that in the end it is what one does with one's powers that makes or mars the artist.

The numerous colour reproductions in this volume faithfully reproduce the attraction of Zorn's colour, which appeals to us by its dash and go rather than by its subtlety and exquisiteness. The palette and method of the great Swede were not unlike those of the French painter Besnard, by whom he was to some extent influenced and who also excelled in rendering the glint of sunlight on bare flesh. But though Zorn's paintings have been exhibited with success throughout Europe and in America, his pictures have not excited the unbounded enthusiasm displayed for his etchings. About these collectors have become infatuated—there is no other word—and the rarer examples are fought for in auctions with bids not unworthy of a Rembrandt.

Originally published at five guineas, like most of his other etchings, a copy of his "Ernest Renan" of 1892 was sold last year for £270, and his "Maja," a Gibsonish etching of a "Gibson girl," for £240. Nothing but the furore of fashion can explain these figures. Nobody disputes the fact that Zorn was a great draughtsman, a master in building up forms with firm, decisive lines, with brilliant yet simplified contrasts of light and shade. He was a great technician, but there are others equally great whose etchings do not command these high prices. The Frenchman Forain is certainly his equal if not his superior as a draughtsman and an etcher, and Forain has used his technical powers with more intellectuality and with a far higher moral purpose than Zorn ever possessed. The popularity and prestige of Zorn is a sign that materialism still predominates among the children of this world. There can be no question to-day of the value, as assets, of his etchings. But for all their brilliance, their exuberant vitality and masterly technique, one is not sure that their present estimation is firmly based and lasting. A new generation is growing up, a generation seared by the experience of war, a generation impatient of trivialities and demanding that the palace of art shall be something better than a doll's house. Zorn will no longer be the most prized of modern etchers, as he is this day, when at last the things of the spirit are preferred to the pomp of the flesh.

FRANK RUTTER.

WAYFARERS.*

The fashion in modern fiction of overtaking as it were complete and frequently aggressive strangers upon the high road of the imagination, directing their particular vices and abruptly deserting them without a farewell nod, is certainly both economical in preliminary detail and in most cases successful. There is in such encounters a breath of mystery and hazard that lends to the short story a fascination and dramatic quality difficult to maintain in the novel. One is left with the enlivening idea that were it not for the fog of commonplace occurrences which dull the sense of curiosity, life would be for the most ordinary a place of amazing adventure and Mr. Hugh Walpole's "Bombastes Furioso" quite a normal person.

Mr. Walpole has, I take it, some such notion in his "Thirteen Travellers," a series of studies dealing with the several occupants of a building of flats in the West End. The idea is not only admirable—it is workable. Varieties of character suit Mr. Walpole. He has always possessed a sympathetic curiosity respecting remote old ladies, fat young men of means, lonely domestics, persons sinister and persons simply comic. But in some of his novels he has smothered his characters in blankets of impressive but deadening fluency, and in that respect the short story is evidently sympathetic to Mr. Walpole's art. He gives to tragedy an atmosphere both intense and conserved, while in his lighter moments, as when the absurd toy dog is overwhelmed by a Rolls-Royce ("it started tottering across, uttering tiny snorts of sensual excitement") his gift for minute portrayal is not flung like a stone of price amongst a load of serviceable boulders.

There are certain respects where criticism might be made with advantage. For one thing Mr. Walpole is deficient in the supreme technique of the short story—the element of surprise. His stories conclude usually with death—but hardly ever with intensity. Absalom Jay is a memorable study (though, to any member of a club, even to-day by no means exceptional), but his end is not clearly indicated. Miss Morganhurst is almost on parallel lines. Secondly, as a series of studies based on the changes of the post-war period, the gallery is hardly representative. It deals too persistently with old ladies and the type of young man on whom Mr. Walpole would be the first to admit the war has made no impression at all. And there is one lamentable story called "Lizzie Rand" which, however suitable for family reading, is from Mr. Walpole rather a catastrophe.

Mr. Gilbert Cannan in "Pugs and Peacocks" is interested from quite another standpoint in the mental chaos produced by the war, and this is the first of a series devoted, I fear, to a lamentation over the criminality of all those persons who not only were involved in the conflict but had the effrontery to defend their (however ridiculous) principles. For them Mr. Cannan has apparently no patience at all. But his central character, Melian, will not allow it to disturb him: "I shall just retire into my work until the noise is over and the captains and the majors and the colonels depart."

The war being over, there is, alas, no star on the sky of universal depravity and dead quiet. "I live in dread," says this precious Melian, "of the moment when the present din and confusion shall cease and we shall begin to hear all over the world the coarse, destructive laughter of the triumphant proletariat, the apotheosis of ignorance, cruelty, greed, meanness and tyranny. . . ." By which one gathers Mr. Cannan only very occasionally indeed raises his voice in "Land of Hope and Glory."

Mrs. Canfield in "The Brimming Cup" is less personal and has a rational plot to occupy a normal reader's attention. But the amount of sheer talk, the burden of words, is almost intolerable. There is a capacity for abundance in the American novelist that is astonishing. At the same

* "The Thirteen Travellers." By Hugh Walpole. 8s. 6d. net. (Hutchinson.)—"Pugs and Peacocks." By Gilbert Cannan. 8s. 6d. net. (Hutchinson.)—"The Brimming Cup." By Dorothy Canfield. 8s. 6d. net. (Jonathan Cape.)—"A Marriage of Inco-venience." By Holloway Horn. 7s. 6d. net. (Collins.)

time the book contains much that is sound and sincere and is original in one respect—it raises an insistent cry for the restoration and preservation of the quiet, controlled life. It is a fact of deepening significance that the most ominous heritage of the war is, for all those who cannot isolate themselves, the foundation of a condition of such mental stress and instability as to arouse serious anxiety and foreboding.

"A Marriage of Inconvenience," by Mr. Holloway Horn, is in another class from the other three novels. It is a conventional story, loosely strung together, of a girl who marries a middle-aged man, leaves him, works for the cinema, is an artist's model, assists a dramatist and thus encounters the wayfarers or travellers who might, under Mr. Walpole's method, have presented more compact and vital significance. But Mr. Horn still writes too like the promising author of one book. It is to be regretted the more as his sense of character is so unforced and entertaining.

FREDERICK WATSON.

IRELAND UNFREED.*

By birth, tradition, taste and temperament Sir William Watson is an Englishman. In all his poems there is not the least echo or reminiscence of the Celtic Renaissance; on the slopes of his Parnassus no "Celtic seed flowers like a flame"; and if his Muse ever crossed the Irish Channel she probably apostrophised it as St. George's Sea. Like the true Norman-Saxon, Sir William is not a democrat; one cannot imagine him crying, "All, whoever you are, come travel with me"; like the true Briton he is not an internationalist; he never beats the big drum of universal brotherhood. Yet he is not a "Little Englishman"; eclectic, nationalistic, Imperialistic though he be, his sympathies are not bounded by the white cliffs of Dover, or by the Barrier Reef of Australasia—they stretch even across the Irish Channel. In his magnificent "Ode on the Coronation of King Edward" Watson showed that his imperialism was the noble imperialism of a poet, not the imperialism of an imperious political bully, and even then he was able to focus and envisage the Irish situation in the memorable description of Ireland as "the lovely bride whom we have wedded but have never won." Since that date Sir William has married an Irish wife; since that date more black and bloody chapters have been added to the tragical history of Ireland "whom wedlock has the more estranged," and now the understanding sympathy shown in his great Imperial Ode has blossomed into a volume of poems—"Ireland Unfreed."

As a true old-fashioned Englishman, Sir William has ever been a champion of justice and liberty, and his championship of Ireland at once challenges comparison with his championship of Armenia some twenty years ago. But the challenge, though inevitable, is not quite fair, for the occasions are hardly comparable. No one, I think, would deny that his championship of Armenia was more passionate and more powerful than is his championship of Ireland. What else could we expect? In "The Purple East" the poet was scourging his country for tarrying to avenge wrong. In "Ireland Unfreed" he is scourging England for just such wrong as he called upon her to avenge, and one can guess that his tears are falling upon his scourge. "The Lord chasteneth whom He loveth," and no brave Englishman who loves England will fail to chasten England when England does a wrong; but it is not easy for an English poet to scourge St. George. Yet at times Sir William's wrath blazes up into passionate reproach and we can hear again the thunders of "The Purple East." His "Reprisal by Fire," which is perhaps the best poem in the little collection, quite reaches the highest level of dignified Watsonian invective:

> "These barbarous deeds that well may make our name
> A byeword, and a hissing, and a shame
> Throughout the Earth. This is the doom-paved way
> By which great Empires in august array
> March to their thunderous deaths mid rage and flame.
> These are the acts
> Make domination seem a maniac jest,
> Heard mid the flare of a distempered sun."

Bitterly and finely satirical too are his lines to Sir Hamar Greenwood, and the lines beginning:

> "Thee, wounded Ireland, thee I gratulate
> First on thy wounds,"

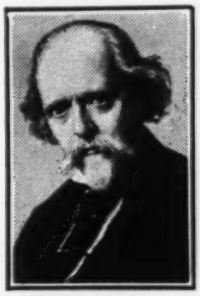
but, as a rule, the poems are more admonitory than comminatory, and indulge rather in exhortation than in invective. They lament the rusting, in Lloyd George's hand, of St. George's spear, while his "minions fierce and fell shatter doomed Ireland's homes"; they plead with Ireland "divinely to forgive," they exhort America to pledge her word that Ireland's freedom shall not "prove the bright mother of Dark Calamity," but they do not always attain to the height of his great argument—"Ireland Unfreed"—and sometimes they condescend to such expressions as "Captive Maiden," "Thralled One."

We do not think that "Ireland Unfreed" quite equals Watson's best work in "The Purple East," but nevertheless it is a noble and courageous volume, worthy both of the great poet's art and heart.

RONALD CAMPBELL MACFIE.

* "Ireland Unfreed." By Sir William Watson. (John Lane.)

THE MASTER OF MAN.*



Sir Hall Caine.

You will look in vain among his English contemporaries for a novelist with whom Sir Hall Caine may be compared; he has more in common with the novelists of Scandinavia who in recent years have been coming over our horizon. No English novelist has a larger reputation in their countries, and it is possible they have to some extent fallen under his influence. These Scandinavians have his glowing sense of drama; his capacity for painting on broad canvases; his penchant for the big theme and his power of handling it. Like him, too, they are too serious to make any use of humour; they deal frankly with the lure of sex, and are invariably concerned with poignant moral issues. There would seem to be also some affinity between the Manx and the Scandinavian character. Both have a good deal of raw nature about them. Men and women alike have a rugged, stubborn, primitive simplicity; a way of getting themselves into difficulties, or getting others into difficulties, sometimes by a perversity, sometimes by a naïve honesty of action of which more sophisticated people would be incapable, and by a slowness of thinking which prevents them from taking the right course promptly, so that they only take it, and then resolutely, when it is too late to save the situation.

When the schoolmaster in "The Master of Man" finds he has punished Victor Stowell for a fault of which he is innocent he writes to the boy's father, the Deemster:

> "I have not only punished an innocent boy, but one who, in taking his punishment, was doing an act of divine unselfishness. I can never look into his face again. If I am to remain as head of your school you must take your boy away."

The father, without protest, does so, and the subsequent tragedy of Victor's life may be said to result from this queer injustice. Then, when it is too late to remedy matters, Victor's bosom friend, Gell, owns up manfully that the guilt was his and runs away from school and refuses to go back.

In due course the disasters into which this David and Jonathan stumble, after they arrive at manhood, may be traced to this same hesitancy of character. Victor is a noble idealist, but his mind works slowly; he fails to see clearly what he ought not to do until after he has done it, and then only sees clearly what he ought to do when he has

* "The Master of Man: The Story of a Sin." By Hall Caine. 6s. (Heinemann.)

XUM

let the right moment for doing it go by. Gell is a smaller nature and more timorous; in a manner of speaking, he covertly makes the slide and Victor slips on it. But if he has not Victor's implacable moral rectitude, he honours and looks up to his friend; and if he cannot equal him in the strength and sternness with which he makes atonement for his sin, he climbs high enough to forgive Victor for wronging him in a way that few friends could have forgiven.

But Sir Hall Caine's great gifts are that he knows how to imagine a story that takes sure hold upon his reader, and how to relate it with a dramatic and emotional intensity beside which the plotlessness and niggling, pretentious psychology of much of our highbrow modern fiction seems languid and bloodless. The story is the thing with him, as the play was with Shakespeare; there are no long waits, no dull patches; every chapter adds to its developments, and for its sheer human interest and dramatic power he has done nothing finer or more moving than "The Master of Man" since the great days of "The Deemster" and "The Scapegoat."

ARTHUR RUTLAND.

MAN AND HIS PAST.*

Archæology has its roots back in the remotest periods of Man's appearance upon earth; indeed, the author of this book seems inclined to trace it back to the time of the supposed arboreal ancestor of Man. From the earliest times of which we have any record there seem to have been individuals interested in studying the pre-history and ancient remains of their own race and of other folk with whom they were brought into contact. Nevertheless, archæology must be accounted the youngest of the sciences and has, in fact, only made good its claim to be reckoned a science, in this country at any rate, within the last half-century.

The author of the volume before us, an archæologist of the most up-to-date school, is equipped for practical work in the field by training and experience gained by excavation work in Egypt and the Sudan, as well as in this country. He is, moreover, in a position to do work whose value will be felt by all archæologists in the kingdom, having been recently appointed Archæological Officer of the Ordnance Survey Department, a post which shows that the Department at length realises the importance of making the archæological information given in its maps as complete and as correct as possible. Hitherto this has depended upon individual surveyors, aided by local informants, who might, or might not, be qualified, and might have theories of their own for which they were glad to get the support of an entry on an official map.

The book deals with the aims and methods of scientific archæology, and with its relation to history, anthropology and other sciences. In Mr. Crawford's view, its aim should be to give as complete a picture as possible of the evolution of the human race and its civilisation in all lands and at all stages. It begins where history fails us, correcting and supplementing the meagre records of the Dark Ages, and is our only guide amid the utter darkness of the prehistoric period. Theoretically it is only a branch of anthropology, if the latter is regarded as "the whole study of Man. But in practice, anthropology . . . is mainly confined to the study of existing primitive races." The author goes on to point out that the gulf between anthropology and archæology is very much wider in this country than abroad, and the great advantage it would be if there were more co-operation between workers in the two fields. The same applies to other sciences, on which archæology is dependent for much of the detail it requires in order correctly to interpret facts discovered. For instance, it asks the geologist how land and water were distributed and what was the nature of the soil at various epochs of the past in order to know what areas were habitable or otherwise: it needs the botanist to map the vegetation of bygone periods and to determine the relative areas covered by forest, grassland and marsh in order to judge whether the inhabitants of a certain region at a certain time were in a hunting, pastoral or agricultural stage. The author pleads eloquently for co-operation in these matters and for a series of maps which shall display the result of the researches of various specialists for the benefit of workers in other fields, who cannot be specialists in all the sciences, though they must have a working acquaintance with others besides their own.

He will be glad to learn that one of his appeals is likely soon to find an answer. At the Congress of the South-Eastern Union of Scientific Societies which met at Reading from the 8th to the 11th June last, Professor J. Percival, Professor of Agriculture at the University College, Reading, described the finding in Northern Syria of a wild wheat from which the most important species of wheat now in use have been developed. He also described how certain species of wheat have been found associated with certain early races of man, e.g., the Alpine race of Central Europe and the "beaker-man" of the late Neolithic and Bronze ages, and said that these same species are still extensively cultivated in those parts of Central Europe which these races are known to have occupied. These facts will, we understand, appear in a book on the races of wheat which Professor Percival has now in the press.

The author's points are illustrated by examples taken mostly from his own experience, which adds to their force, and mainly from the part of England with which he is most familiar. This he calls Wessex, but it is an arbitrary Wessex, comprising the counties of Berkshire, Hampshire, Wiltshire and Dorset. We are inclined to cavil at the growing practice of using the names of the ancient Saxon kingdoms for divisions of the country made to suit a particular purpose, though it is no doubt convenient. But if this is a blot, it is a trivial one on an admirable book, which should be in all libraries and in the hands of scientific societies in general, for the promotion of work on the lines it suggests. We should add that it contains some useful illustrations and valuable hints for field-workers, especially for the many who are interested in tracing Roman roads.

ALBANY F. MAJOR.

* "Man and His Past." By O. G. S. Crawford. 10s. 6d. net. (Oxford University Press.)

THE PORT OF LONDON.*

How many of us, even those whose business prosperity is dependent upon it, know anything about the history of the Port of London? It is as little known as Milton is read; it is part of the greatness of London as he is of England, and the majority are contented to take them both for granted and are not curious or energetic enough to go behind their reputations and learn how they grew. There has been some excuse perhaps for this ignorance about the Port, for despite its importance not merely to London but to the Empire, there has been no adequate history of it until now; but now, with these two handsome volumes of Sir Joseph Broodbank's to turn to, that excuse no longer holds good.

Sir Joseph has not aimed at light and popular narrative; there are legal and indispensable business aspects of the subject and details of organisation that do not lend themselves to such treatment, and he has done his work thoroughly in all its branches. But there is so much of romance inherent to such a history that with all its invaluable wealth of information about dock regulations and dues, shipping, labour agreements and the outcome of various committees of inquiry, the book is not only a storehouse of all those matters that the practical man of affairs will find useful and interesting, but offers much that makes fascinating reading for all and sundry. There are careful, admirably presented accounts of the river and its traffic in Roman, Saxon and Norman times, the building of harbours and wharves during the Middle Ages, the increase of foreign trade and growth of the docks and warehouses along the river-side throughout the centuries until,

* "History of the Port of London." By Sir Joseph G. Broodbank. Two vols. Illustrated. £3 3s. (Daniel O'Connor.)

from almost idyllic beginnings, it has become the bewilderingly vast, intricate and busy organisation it is to-day. Special chapters are given in the second volume to a consideration of the Port of London Act and to a record of the work of the Port of London Authority from its establishment down to August, 1914. Later chapters deal with the miscellaneous multitude of labourers connected with the Port, the labour troubles with which it has had to contend, the effect of the war on its trade and the part it played in the war. An excellent closing chapter on the future of the Port indicates that as a result of the victorious war its extension will be quickened and that "the future of the greatest port in the world can be regarded with as much confidence as we look forward to the future of the Empire of which it is the capital." Sir Joseph Broodbank has been personally associated with the Port administration for forty-nine years and, in writing his story of its more recent developments, has had access to all its records of the last hundred and twenty years. His chronicle and survey has therefore a weight of authority and furnishes a wealth of detail that gives his book an altogether unique interest and value. The illustrations—there are over seventy of them, showing various phases of the life and business of the Port at all stages of its history—are beautifully reproduced in colour and black-and-white from ancient and modern paintings, etchings, drawings, prints and from photographs; and in the matter of printing and binding and general arrangement the publishers are to be congratulated on having given an important book an embodiment that is worthy of it.

F. H.

MOLTKE.*

The latest addition to Constable's "Makers of the Nineteenth Century" series is Lieutenant-Colonel F.E. Whitton's "Moltke." Colonel Whitton is of course no novice. His "History of Poland" and "Marne Campaign" are familiar to the public, and certain confidential documents from his pen have been called blesséd by those in high places. But I venture to say that even his admirers will be surprised by the magnitude of his latest book; to find the historian so admirably combined with the biographer is as rare as it is refreshing. With what must have been infinite pains Colonel Whitton has peered into the cupboards of history and produced an absorbing narrative, without at any time forgetting that his avowed task has been to present as faithful a picture as might be of *der grosse Schweiger*. He has constantly borne in mind the fact that, great man as Moltke was, he did not possess eyes in the back of his head, and consequently could only perceive the objects comprised within a normal field of vision; so that, in describing the battle of Sadowa, for instance, Colonel Whitton looks at the engagement through the eyes of Moltke himself—an enormously important procedure when one attempts to appreciate the great Prussian's methods.

The book is in fact divisible into two portions—the historical and the biographical. Both are in themselves valuable contributions to literature. So interesting is the historical aspect that one is tempted to be drawn away from one's task of considering Moltke's life, but, after all, one has to do here with the man rather than his world. For it may justly be said that this man influenced his world more than his world influenced him. It was no case, by the way, of the great soldier bound by the chains of the politician—though Moltke was fully alive to the importance of co-ordinating military operations and political objects—for (says the biographer) "... luckily for Germany he was the one man in the Fatherland whom Bismarck could neither frighten, humble, cajole nor ruin."

Moltke believed in war, though not in the "frightfulness" adopted by his successors in 1914–18, as witness his objection to the bombardment of Paris. "Perpetual peace," he wrote, "is a dream, and it is not even a beautiful dream. ... Without war the world would stagnate and lose itself in materialism." Believing thus, he set himself to create a war machine that would, once set in motion, operate automatically, yet not so automatically as to be entirely dependent on its head. Rather he sought to encourage individualism to an extent that alarmed minds accustomed to adore the Napoleonic idol. That his methods were largely justified was proved by the success of the Prussian armies in circumstances that called for initiative on the part of junior officers and the ready assumption of grave responsibilities by higher commanders.

Lieut.-Col. F. E. Whitton.

One is, however, tempted to argue one point with Colonel Whitton; in discussing the battle of Gravelotte he remarks that, considering the unfavourable character of the general situation, it is little short of amazing [*sic*] that in Moltke's initial orders (as Chief of the General Staff) there is not a single word with respect to cavalry reconnaissance or scouting. While it is undoubtedly astonishing that the commanders made so little use of their cavalry for these purposes, yet, in regard to Moltke's personal responsibility, Colonel Whitton remarks (p. 234) that it was Moltke's rule to issue orders distinguished by their brevity and simplicity, leaving it to army, corps, divisional and other commanders to issue in turn such detailed orders as were necessary to secure the objects indicated by Moltke in his general directives. Moltke believed that by this means he avoided cramping the action of his subordinates, relying on the care with which he had trained his commanders to act upon their own judgment while still broadly following the lines which he had himself laid down for them. One feels, therefore, that in the matter of reconnaissance Moltke may have felt justified in assuming that his commanders would themselves realise its importance.

To deal fully with this book would be to attempt something in the nature of a Coke upon Littleton; it would require a profound knowledge of strategy and a minute study of history. It is enough for me to say that it is a work of value to the historian, of deep interest to the student of warfare, and an absorbing narrative for the general reader. While Colonel Whitton has carefully kept his own personality in the background, his comments and deductions encourage one to hope that he may in the future enter the lists with Clausewitz himself "On War."

FRANCIS D. GRIERSON (Captain).

* "Moltke." By Lieutenant-Colonel F. E. Whitton, C.M.G. 14s. net. (Constable.)

BLINKERS.*

In the dedicatory note to this novel, the author confesses that when Mr. Leon M. Lion gave him the theme for his story—"The Romance of the Preconceived Idea"—he worked at it with joy. The joy has found its way into the book, for it is firm of texture, vigorous and well proportioned throughout, and is written with delightful humour. Miranda, daughter of a Sage who designs wallpapers too good for the obscure town of Moscombe, is the heroine. Her father has educated her. She is all that is charming, but she is poor. So she enters the service of the Merrytrees at a country vicarage as parlourmaid. Mrs. Merrytree talks to her occasionally, and is amazed:

"The Vicar says that this is an age of Unfaith, and young people especially have wandered from the Light. I should be happy to think it was not so with you. The faith of a young girl should be strong."

Adam Issell's daughter replied promptly:

"But we must not accept too blindly the faith of others. . . . The faith which we accept blindly from others may be fathered by fear, and mothered by desire."

No wonder that the vicar's lady begins to be suspicious about "M. Wensdy." She inspects her bedroom, and finds various signs of the gentlewoman—treed boots, and a copy of Blake's lyrics.

Now young Ralph Somervell, the squire's son, full of convention (otherwise the Preconceived Idea), falls in love with Miranda, and manfully holds out at first against the family opposition. Mr. Vachell gets a lot of fun out of the situation just here—for both the vicar's wife and Ralph's father swallow a paragraph in a society paper to the effect that a nobleman's daughter is masquerading as a parlourmaid in their district. This is all stage managed by Miles Purdie, an unorthodox and dashing journalist. Purdie is excellently sketched, though we might with advantage hear a little more of him towards the end of the tale. There is a big surprise for readers at the close of this entertaining history—a surprise it would be a shame to reveal here. Mr. Vachell displays an admirable economy of phrase, and an increasing efficiency in handling his material.

THE MAKING OF AN OPTIMIST.†

At first blush there may seem little enough in recent events or in our present circumstances to turn any man into an optimist; but Mr. Hamilton Fyfe has not stopped short at analysing the froth and noisy elements of modern life; he has probed deeper and looked for the soul of goodness in things evil and found it. He has seen chicanery, humbug and the worst human passions triumphant the world over, but though he has lost faith in men—a good many of them—he has not lost faith in man; and his optimism is grounded on this.

He makes it clear that before the war his ideas and ideals were those of the contented majority; they were ready-made for him and he accepted them without question—accepted our modern civilisation as the highest that had yet been achieved, and its evils as flaws inevitable in all human endeavour. But the war shook him out of these complacencies and opened his eyes to the truth. As war correspondent he saw a deal of the barbarous business on five fronts and much of what went on behind the scenes in the ruling circles of his own and of other countries; these things influenced him powerfully and wrought a drastic change in his opinions. It was borne in upon him that

"in all lands the people were deceived and driven, the politicians everywhere were corrupted by the love of power; that rulers everywhere, whether monarchs, presidents or prime ministers, strive either for their own interests or in the interest of a party, or to set up some system based on theory and wind."

Coming back from Russia to London in 1917, he found London, influenced by the Russian outbreak, talking loosely of revolution: "It was mostly vague and mostly foolish"; nevertheless, sick at heart with all he had seen of the ruin to which people had been led, he felt there must be a change:

"And there must be, too, I said to myself, a revolution of thought that would prevent the enjoyment by a small number of ease, comfort, luxury, while the mass were begrudged even the beginnings of a deliverance from their toilsome, ill-rewarded lot."

If the poor were selfish, he recognised that they were merely following the example set them by the rich, who have become rich by being so. Brought up against facts, seeing things thus for himself, he came to marvel at the patience of the Many everywhere and

"so, in my fiftieth year, I found that by the process which I have tried to describe, my outlook upon the world, my conceptions of life, my ideas about men and governments and all the multitudinous activities of human effort, had been turned completely round."

It needed some honesty and broadmindedness to arrive at that renunciation of old and settled convictions, and no little courage to make this outspoken confession of it. His experiences should have plunged him into pessimism, but he counts himself as an average man and believes that what has changed him will change others and that the world will yet be made safe for humanity by the new spirit of love and understanding and brotherhood that the War awoke among us and that the Peace cannot kill. It is the old hope of the ages, but he may be right in his conviction that it is in the way of being realised at last. His book will help towards that end; the profound sincerity and poignancy of feeling with which it is written should inspire not a few with his own belief in the practical potency of love as "a faith, a fellowship, a religion, a bond which can transform the world."

DOMESDAY BOOK.*

Since Edgar Lee Masters conquered the reading world with his "Spoon River Anthology" he has published little more than pale reflections of that brilliant book. And now come two volumes of character so diverse that, at any rate, they point his versatility. "Mitch Miller" is well of its kind. Of literary descent from "Tom Sawyer," though with the humour and the pathos far less appealing than in that parent book, it shows artistic conscience and the perpetual playing with the idea of the finalities of death which fills so much of the mind and heart of Mr. Masters. Carrying one away to Abraham Lincoln's home-village, amid the human hayseed antiques of American back-town life, its quietude brings refreshment and relief after the storm, struggle, force and shouting vanities of London or New York. Mr. Jonathan Cape (to whose enterprise in publishing, good fortune!) has produced the volume with delicate taste.

But the book which matters just now is Edgar Lee Masters's "Domesday Book." This has sprung from his own inspiration, and acknowledges no literary descent but the "Spoon River Anthology," although it is sufficiently certain that Walt Whitman and Robert Browning were among the godfathers or good fairies who visited this poet's cradle. The work reflects much the same view of life—the contemplation of this world-stage of passion and puppetry through eyes of love and a searching irony of vision that yet is more of the heart than of the head. To Mr. Masters's fine humanity even a "saintly hag," like Miriam Fay, is a spectacle for pity and regret, although we see her coming especially from her sacerdotal harbourage to damn the name of a dead girl with the cold spite of a virtuous cruelty. The poet, realising the truth that every one has a book in his life, tells of the tragedy of Elenor Murray, found dead beside the river, with no physical circumstance to show precisely the cause of her death. There is merely the fact of the poor corpse, already visited

* "Blinkers." By Horace Annesley Vachell. 8s. 6d. (Cassell.)

† "The Making of an Optimist." By Hamilton Fyfe. 12s. 6d. (Leonard Parsons.)

* "Domesday Book." By Edgar Lee Masters. 20s. (Eveleigh Nash.)—"Mitch Miller." By Edgar Lee Masters. 7s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)

by the flies; with, sticking above the pocket's edge, a banner representing Joan of Arc kneeling in prayer, and in the banner a paper with the words, "To be brave and not to flinch."

The hunter who found the body telephoned to the coroner, Merivale; and he, though about to start on a holiday-jaunt, threw up the expedition—"The jig is up," said he, in the brisk American manner—and set to work, with six well-chosen jurymen, to solve the problem. Mr. Masters sets down for us the information these authorities gather. All sorts of men and women, far and near, strangers and familiars, and a few others whose evidence is only indirect, give their testimony to the life, character, hopes and despairs of Elenor Murray, until the truth is found; and the man, whose little soul had doubted the quality of her great giving, provides the answer. He had killed her love and standing pride with a word, and then when the shock of syncope had seized her, held her in his arms, and so ignorantly prevented her recovery.

In this story, as with all effective narratives of human life, it is the spirit that counts and not the framework, the physical. Mr. Lee Masters urges again, as he did in the famous "Anthology," the infinite vanity of earthly circumstance with the irony of the frequent fact, that it is generally the great true natures who boldly sin and willingly suffer; while it is the human flies and parrots, the goodily-good with their psalms and postures and unctuous uncharity, they who are remembered in the stained-glass windows and mentioned in the honours list, they who "make good" in the world and, it seems, also in heaven, having secured balances in both the reliable banks—it is they who are yet the moral, spiritual bankrupts, whose power for true giving is limited to a practised prayer. Elenor Murray gave herself generously—"a prodigal flower that never shut its petals"—and was "essential genius," whereas the man who had loved her and taken her love, to kill her with a word of loathsome accusation, was "just mechanism of conscious thought and strength." Edgar Lee Masters is a rebel against the hypocrisies grown to conventions which poison this life and soil the essentially clean. Every one who shares his revolt against the cruelties of the consecrate will rejoice in this brave poem, and feel with a kinder heart for those who are without the pale that has been built by the prosperous and the humbugs of piety:

> "Let me tell you:
> I know a worse thing than a German King:
> It is the social scourge of poverty,
> Which cripples, slays the husband and the wife,
> And sends the children forth in life half formed.
> I know a tyranny more insidious
> Than any William had; it is the tyranny
> Of superstition, customs, laws and rules;
> The tyranny of the church, the tyranny
> Of marriage, and the tyranny of beliefs
> Concerning right and wrong, of good and evil;
> The tyranny of taboos, the despotism
> That rules our spirits with commands and threats:
> Ghosts of dead faiths and creeds, ghosts of the past.
> The tyranny, in short, that starves and chains,
> Imprisons, scourges, crucifies the soul. . . ."

Overleaping the necessities Mr. Masters incidentally refers to Elenor as symbolising America; but, at least, to an English mind, the parallel is unconvincing as well as unnecessary. It is enough to say that his "Domesday Book," while not fully equal to "Spoon River Anthology," is a strengthening, frank challenge to the conventionalists: it is packed with lucid wisdom, is rich with human sympathy, and has occasional passages of music which prove the poet.

C. E. LAWRENCE.

A RUSSIAN DIPLOMAT IN ENGLAND.*

M. Nabokoff has related in simple language the momentous course of events which attended his period at the Russian Embassy in London, first as Counsellor of the Embassy from December, 1915, to January, 1917, and then as Chargé d'Affaires until September, 1919.

The outbreak of war found him Russian Consul-General in India. He gives an interesting account of his experiences in that country, where by the courtesy of Sir George Keppel he was the first Russian diplomat to traverse the Khyber Pass, which is *terra prohibita* to foreigners and particularly so to "Russian spies." Under the escort of two sepoys with loaded rifles he walked from Landi-Kotal to Afghan territory. Incidentally M. Nabokoff pays a friendly tribute to Lord Hardinge, whose administration has come in for a good deal of criticism in other quarters. He says:

> "No tribute could be too high for this . . . Viceroy whose personal influence resulted in uniting the Princes and the peoples of India in one patriotic impulse. It was a critical moment, and what was taken for granted at home was in reality a great triumph of wise statesmanship."

Nabokoff was in London when Count Benckendorff, the Russian Ambassador, died in January, 1917, and he took over the duties of the Embassy. At his first meeting with Mr. Lloyd George his reception was rather chilly; and he was never much liked at the English Foreign Office, as he was known to be opposed to Imperialism and in favour of the Republic. And so was Mr. George for that matter, for it was at this period he penned that telegram to Prince Lvov containing the words: "I believe that the Revolution whereby the Russian people have based their destinies on the sure foundation of freedom, is the greatest service they have yet made to the cause for which the Allied peoples have been fighting."

M. Nabokoff has but a poor opinion of the Makers of History at the Peace Conference:

> "The 'Big Four' assembled in Paris and started to settle the destinies of the world. Instead of making peace with Germany, they produced litter upon litter of stillborn puppies of self-determination. . . . No mortal can be cinematographed, photographed, snapshotted fifty times a day, smiling, frowning, lifting his hat, walking down majestic staircases, or, if on flat ground, lifting his legs as for the goose-step . . . without imagining that he is the man destined to be immortal. So the 'Big Four' really believed in all sincerity that if, like Joshua, they said, 'Sun, stand thou still,' the sun would stand still in the midst of heaven. Victory came. But peace, liberty and plenty did not follow. . . . The supplies of bread, meat and coal did not increase by the magic of the fourteen points."

This book is an entertaining medley of history and personalities.

S. M. ELLIS.

* "The Ordeal of a Diplomat." By Constantin Nabokoff. 15s. net. (Duckworth.)

THREE COURSES.*

It is somewhat mixed fare that is provided by these three caterers of fiction for popular consumption. If we take Mr. George A. Birmingham's collection of short stories by way of *hors d'œuvres variees* we shall find much that may serve to aid the appetite of those already hungry for a read, but little to excite the interest of the literary gourmet. It is very much the same kind of assortment of dishes to which Mr. Birmingham has accustomed us. There are indeed two collections—one of various Irish recipes and the others of a more general character. "My Lady Bountiful" herself is perhaps the most piquant item; she, who had been his cook, married her employer, Sir Tony Corless, and found work in her establishment for sisters and other relations, and when the unemployment "dole" became available promptly dismissed them all to become dole-takers, while she engaged a new batch of friends and relations, dismissing them to the dole after a brief interval and engaging a further batch—until the whole district prospered exceedingly at the taxpayers' charge. The last item in the Irish section too is a notable contribution, but of an entirely different savour; it is a tragic episode founded in recent Irish history.

The *pièce de résistance* is, as might have been anticipated, that presented by Mr. Eden Phillpotts, unlike though his

* "Lady Bountiful." By George A. Birmingham. 6s. net. (Christophers.)—"Eudocia: a Comedy Royal." By Eden Phillpotts. 7s. 6d. net. (Heinemann.)—"Educating Ernestine." By Florence Kilpatrick. 3s. 6d. net. (Thornton Butterworth.)

XUM

new book is to anything that he has put before us hitherto. Leaving the Dartmoor of to-day for the Byzantium of many yesterdays ago, he makes of "half a page from Gibbon" a capital story, full of action, of character and of colour. His prefatory reference to Gibbon will doubtless send many of his readers to that forty-eighth chapter of the great work wherein it is told how Constantine XI bound his widow not to remarry, and how in seven short months by strategy she became absolved by the Patriarch of her promise to the dead emperor. It used to be said of a German scientist that given a small bone he constructed a camel, or some other beast then unknown to him. So it would seem has Mr. Phillpotts taken the few lines of the historian and from them constructed not so much a story but that which is, we feel, *the* story of Eudocia. Here, we feel, is Byzantium as it was—gay, bright and intriguing and recking all too little of the enemy on the borders while statesmen and churchmen plotted together and the people were given "bread and circuses" to mollify them should there be any indication of their attempting to get troublesome. Though the novelist has drawn some of his characters with a firm, skilled hand, the succession of his scenes suggest that out of his materials might be drawn a scenario that would afford some telling pageantry if rendered on the "pictures." The visit of Eudocia to the captive general who has dared to show his admiration for her; the scene in the vineyards; the great occasion when the foppish Bardas thinks he is the one chosen to share the throne, and is dramatically supplanted by Romanus, seem almost to ask for rendering in the terms of modern pictorial drama. The comedy which he presents, if read in the light of to-day, is alive, at least in spirit, says Mr. Phillpotts, and again and again in the course of his story we feel that the words put in the mouths of his ancient folk were penned with a consciousness of modern instances. If "Eudocia" be not Mr. Phillpotts at his best, it is at any rate a thoroughly interesting example of the historical novel.

To revert to the conceit with which I set out to consider this trio of most diverse volumes, it may be said that Mrs. Kilpatrick contributes to our menu the sweet—and a pleasant sweet at that. With "Our Elizabeth" Mrs. Kilpatrick had proved that she possessed a very light hand in the producing of literary pastry, and with "Educating Ernestine" she gives us further evidence of it, for here we have something light even as a dish of flummery. The story concerns an Australian girl who, left an orphan, determines on spending her unexpectedly small patrimony in visiting titled (but by no means wealthy) relations in England. She was welcomed by her snobbish aunt, the Countess, on account of her supposititious riches, and snubbed—to put it mildly—by her uncle the Earl, who could not forgive his late brother, her father, for making a fortune out of pig breeding. There is a lively entanglement of interests among the broadly farcical characters and much flippant and amusing conversation among them, the whole being rendered by the author with a deft and delightfully amusing touch.

WALTER JERROLD.

POESY AND POSTURING.*

Though the settling over London of a fog drives all but the most patient and even-tempered of us to mutter imprecations, we are prepared to admit there is something to be said for the claim that fogs are an artistic attraction to our great city. That any such admission will be only made on a nice bright day, and not when traffic is disorganised and eyes are smarting and bronchial-tubes agonised, does not matter. But granting everything that enthusiastic artists claim in admiration of the Turneresque effects to be seen when the light of day is completely obscured by a dense mass of poison-gas and soot from London's chimneys, what should we say in reply to a poet who, lost in mist and reverie, exclaimed: "Am I the god upon the face of the deep, deepless deepness in the Beginning?" We should politely beg his pardon, and request him to repeat the question in more intelligible form. The idea of a "deep, deepless deepness," either in the Beginning, the Present or the Future, would require some explanation, even though we had thoroughly mastered Einstein's theory —which we have not.

Since we should protest at a poet's use of such senseless language in conversation, why should we tolerate it in print? Surely poetry needs to be intelligible?

Some twenty-five years ago a Japanese youth lived with Joaquin Miller in California for four years. During that time he wrote "Seen and Unseen: or Monologues of a Homeless Snail." Considering he was writing in a language which was foreign to him (though he began to learn English in Japan at the age of ten, and from the first was an enthusiastic student), this book of verse was by way of being a remarkable achievement—but was it poetry? To-day Yone Noguchi himself describes "its wild fugitive words sounding almost like a child's babbles," but he is still proud of it because he succeeded in making himself "more naked and true"—whatever that may mean. If Mr. Noguchi wishes us to understand that in the writing of these verses he succeeded in giving literal expression to the thoughts and fancies which entered his head while musing on the hills behind San Francisco, we are doubly amazed—first at his pretence that the verses give intelligent expression to ideas, and secondly at his complacence in presenting such platitudes and posturings as a serious contribution to English literature.

Without rhyme, rhythm or reason, these extraordinary scribblings tax the patience of the reader anxious to learn how Noguchi "read the heart of Nature, and also my soul." Is it that the poet has a message, but is unable to give expression to his thoughts in the medium he has chosen? Or is it that the "intangible delicacy"—so one admirer describes the incomprehensibilities—"my meaningless but wisdom-wreathed syllables" are merely an elaborate pose? In other words, can Mr. Yone Noguchi write English in such a way that it is not necessary to "read between the lines and find the doorless entrance to his philosophy"—to quote the editor of *The Lark*, who must share the responsibility with Mr. Noguchi for bringing the muddle-headed musings of a homeless snail to the notice of a long-suffering and inoffensive public, a quarter of a century ago.

The fact is that Mr. Noguchi can and could express himself much more lucidly; then why did he take such pains to write in such a way that his lines "to many heedless ears shall be but the unintelligible frogs' rain-songs"? Whatever motive prompted him to adopt the style he did, the fact remains that his verses appealed to a certain section of readers, and a second edition of "Seen and Unseen" has been recently published in New York. About seven years ago Mr. Noguchi was in London, and waxed very indignant because there was such a small audience in the theatre where he went to see a Shakespearean play. "You English, gross in taste, most uneducated, do never know a real thing even when you see it," he wrote in one of the London papers. We fear the reader who passed the final proofs of the second edition of "Seen and Unseen" merits similar castigation, for there are misprints almost on every page. But it is so difficult to distinguish between a compositor's error and the poet's fine frenzy that we are inclined to commiserate with the unfortunate printer's reader who was compelled to read Mr. Noguchi's lines from beginning to end—and to read some of them twice!

D. J. E.

* "Seen and Unseen." By Yone Noguchi. (New York.)

THINGS JAPANESE.*

Were it only for its reproductions Mr. Noguchi's book on Hiroshige would be welcome; it is doubly so, when one remembers that Mr. Noguchi, of all Japanese who write English, is best qualified by his own art, to interpret the

* "Hiroshige." By Yone Noguchi. 25s. net. (Mathews.)—"The Noh Plays of Japan." By A. Waley. 18s. net. (Allen & Unwin.)—"Tales of the Samurai." By A. Miyamori. 10s. net (Tokyo: Kyō-bun-Kwan.)

art of Hiroshige. For in Noguchi's best poems there is the same natural, sincere attitude to nature which he praises in Hiroshige. He finds in the great Japanese master "the individuality of Nature suddenly seen isolated from the entire." It is a good comment; but I cannot agree that Hiroshige here represents Eastern as opposed to Western ideals in nature-painting. This judgment of Noguchi seems highly disputable:

"The western landscape art, from that of Constable and Corot to that of the late Sir Alfred East, would be called the product of an environment, because of its lack of a certain dash in abstraction or quintessences. However splendidly it is drawn, it will never escape from the details of incidental phenomena, since it is always too closely attached to reality. The general landscape painting of the West, I dare say, follows usually after the path or so-called stock-in-trade (large well-balanced masses of trees in the undulating foreground, a long stretch of stream near by, and then a vista of sky and some disturbed clouds beyond, something of a view like that), which was justified for many years."

It would seem as if the author of these sentences had never seen an etching of Rembrandt's or a painting of Hobbema's; and indeed the whole of Mr. Noguchi's essay displays an acquaintance with nineteenth century European art rather than the older masters or the newer experiments. And he is too often comparing Hiroshige's colour-prints with the oil paintings of European masters—the proper contrast is with nature, with etching or with water-colour, which, except for Whistler, Mr. Noguchi ignores.

The positive side of his essay is exceptionally good. He does not rail at Hokusai as, in reaction against excessive European adulation, some Oriental critics rail, but he rightly claims that Hiroshige is the more significant and vital artist. Hokusai, master as he is, is of the Titans rather than of the Gods, a Hugo of painting rather than a Turgenev or a Tolstoy. His astonishing fecundity, his excessive technical brilliance and his extreme versatility have rather blinded us to a stiffness and dullness of imagination when compared with the delicate truth of Hiroshige, or the passionate splendour of Utamaro; even in technique there are drawings of Toyokuni which make all but the best of Hokusai look rather over-emphatic. Hiroshige has that essential respect for his subject, that refusal to use or thwart or pervert nature for merely æsthetic effect which marks the etchings of Rembrandt: it is this honesty and sincerity which makes him so much greater an artist than Whistler, who owed him so much—a debt on which Mr. Noguchi rather unnecessarily insists, at least for the English public who have long ago realised that Whistler was an artist with a great gift for borrowing, whether from Japan or from Belgium.

Mr. Noguchi remarks, by the way, in his essay that in the "Noh" plays Japan had anticipated the polyphonic prose of Miss Amy Lowell and her companions. It is not a thought that would occur to anyone familiar with the Noh plays in the English versions of Mrs. Stopes or Mr. Ezra Pound. The mixed use of verse and prose in them seems parallel rather to the mixed manner of Elizabethan drama. In this volume in which Mr. Waley continues his work of bringing the treasures of the East to our knowledge, he upsets some preconceived theories about "Noh." The form which has generally been supposed to be an aristocratic form is shown to have been as popular in origin as any drama, and only to have become the fashion of the rich by a sort of accident. Recently there has been discovered a new manuscript containing many plays by Seami, one of the most important of Noh dramatists. Seami was a fourteenth-century author and a favourite of one of those Shoguns who disputed with the Mikado and one another the government of Japan. Mr. Waley gives us details of his life in an introduction which suffers rather from the author's familiarity with a subject and a period of which most of us know nothing. His style in definition is not so clear as in translation, and I am afraid that most readers will find it impossible to get properly acquainted with the mysteries of Zen or of the different "gates to Yugen." The ordinary reader may be recommended to turn from the introduction to the versions Mr. Waley gives of some twenty plays. These translations have all the felicities of his renderings from the Chinese, and the frequent lyrical passages give him the opportunity for that simplicity of language which is so strong a mark of his style. The most moving of the plays is, perhaps, "The Damask Drum," one of those strange symbolic things in which words seem to bear more than their meaning, and sentences are heavy with significances which they cannot interpret, and the very syllables carry passion which they cannot express. Here is a chorus from it:

"The watchman of the hours,—
'Wake from the sleep of the dawn!'
And batters on the drum.
For if its sound be heard, soon shall he see
Her face, the damask of her dress . . .
Aye, damask! He does not know
That on a damask drum he beats,
Beats with all the strength of his hands, his aged hands,
But hears no sound.
'Am I grown deaf?' he cries, and listens, listens:
Rain on the windows, lapping of water on the pool—
Both these he hears, and silent only
The drum, the strange damask drum.
Oh, will it never sound?
I thought to beat the sorrow from my heart,
Wake music in a damask drum; an echo of love
From the voiceless fabric of pride!"

Apart from the æsthetic beauty of the work translated here, Mr. Waley's book is an important contribution to the study of the Japanese theatre, inaugurated in England by Mr. Edwards's admirable "Japanese Plays and Playfellows." The strong tradition of the Japanese theatre, its extreme adaptability combined with extreme rigidity, its singularly mobile use of immobile things, like the mask, are for us to-day of the very greatest interest. There are appended some letters of Mr. Oswald Sickert's describing the present-day acting of Noh plays which it is very illuminating to compare with Seami's accounts—given in Mr. Waley's preface—of the acting in his time and before theirs. No theatre in Europe has so old a tradition as this of Japan. In view of Mr. Gordon Craig's theories Mr. Sickert's description of the effect of masks will be read with interest:

"The masks are not wayward, not extravagant (even the devil's masks are realistic); but they are undoubtedly masks, tied on with a band, and they affect the purpose of achieving an impassive countenance of a cast suited to the character—impassive save that, with a good actor and a mask of a beautiful woman that just hits off the balance between too much and too little physiognomy, I'd swear that at the right moments the mask is affected, its expression intensifies, it lives."

The Russian actors of the Chauve Souris in Paris use Japanese masks occasionally, and certainly they contrive to produce an effect which excels that of any but the very greatest acting. The very immobility of the face seems to free the imagination of the audience.

Mr. Miyamori's book of stories is based on the old legends of Japan's Samurai. The tales are given in surprisingly good English, and the book should prove a useful introduction for boys and girls to the tradition of a chivalry far nearer that of the mediæval world than the military standards of Greece or Rome. Perhaps nothing educatively is more important than that the rising generation should learn properly to estimate the value of Oriental civilisations. Japan is not historically or essentially so significant as China or India; but there is something in its practical spirit which make it perhaps nearer to the average westerner than the intenser or more imaginative peoples of the greater nations. And if any one with the ordinary spirit of curiosity comes across Japanese history, it is certain in time to arouse his interest in things Chinese.

R. ELLIS ROBERTS.

POETRY AND VERSE.

Mr. Harold Monro's "Strange Meetings"[1] must come first of this batch *longo intervallo*. He is a true poet. His imagination plays often over homely and familiar things as firelight might play. In this mood he is sheer delight.

1 "Strange Meetings." By Harold Monro. (Poetry Bookshop).

Some of our modern poets have discovered a more tender and intimate feeling in dealing with animals than their fathers knew; as witness Mr. Ralph Hodgson, Mr. Walter de la Mare, Mr. James Stephens, to take a few names at random. Mr. Monro knows the souls of the Trees, but he also half playfully, all sweetly, makes the little things that serve our daily needs, not only the live fire and water, but the pot and the kettle and the chair and the bed and the clock—"the large and gentle furniture"—live and speak. It is good that there is enough of a discriminating public in these dolorous days to send "Strange Meetings" into its thousands. Let me praise "Week-End" as one who was once a Londoner and knew the passionate pleasure of finding the country again. The poem captures it all again, it is no longer blurred memory. The poetry deals mainly or altogether with gentle things. Even in the lament for the friend killed in the war the poetry is poignant but never unbearable, as much recent poetry of the kind has been. Because the poet deals with the soul of things, with love and grief, but never with the breaking up and dissolution of mortality. It is a book to keep and love and return to.

"Poems by a Brother and Sister"[2] is pleasant reading. They reveal in each a sensitive appreciation of the beauty of earth and skies, a delicate sympathy and a happy vein of imagination. The Sister's is the happier art of the two, though one hesitates to distinguish where both have qualities. There is a real sense of vision in such a poem as "Hyde Park at Evening" and a very happy, clean, shining choice of words. If this is not poetry it very often approaches poetry. Inevitable poetry, that bears the unmistakable sign-manual, does not come to everybody, but at least this brother and sister are of the discipleship, the companionship.

"Terpsichore and Other Poems,"[3] by H. T. Wade-Gery, has a freakish and young air. It is dressed beautifully and amateurishly by the Golden Cockerel Press, which is in itself freakish. It suggests the privately-printed book and the young poet hailing the morning with a triumphant note. We shall hear of Mr. Wade-Gery again. Just at present he is perhaps too strongly influenced by Herrick. Indeed, the poetry is full of echoes, but that is only to say that the young poet lives by admiration. This is charming even though one knows its derivation:

PHŒBUS.

"The little birds do softly sing
To tell us it is evening.
And then—beloved, say not no—
Into the evening we go.

"Into the evening thou and I,
Where the fields do quiet lie,
Where the trees do stately stand,
Set about the lovely land.

"The dying sun from Western skies
Shall feed with golden light your eyes;
The birds' sweet singing we'll attend
Till all in trancèd silence end:

"Till day departing from the skies,
Leave us to our sweet surprise.
And in the starrèd vast of night
Thou and I do take delight."

"Unfinished Poems,"[4] by Elizabeth Paul, does not come within the category of ordinary reviewable books at all. It is a collection of the fragmentary thoughts of a poetic and delicate nature which were found after death and are published now by the simple piety of one who loved her. Suffice it to say that these unfinished and hardly-shaped fragments display a pensive and alluring delicacy of theme and thought, a real and intense love of beauty and very often a gift of beautiful words:

"The room was full of trembling thoughts,
So fleet, so delicate, they lived and died on wings
With each succeeding breath."

That might have expressed the hidden room which was the soul of the writer.

"Lyra Mutabilis"[5] is a book of simple songs, mainly inspired by Love and Death. They have dignity, and they sing themselves very well, but it cannot be said of them that they are inevitable poetry; doubtless they comforted the heart from which they came and doubtless they would please many who have also suffered love and loss. "The Companion" is imaginative, and if not a poem is very nearly one, and further on in the book "The Mother" has a simple charm and truth.

"Glimpses of the Passion"[6] is a tiny volume of religious poetry which has a solemnity and dignity worthy its great subject. It is a book of much accomplishment, of many devout thoughts expressed in language which does not fail of its purpose, but, like nearly all the books of this batch under review, it lacks *that*—just the inexpressible *that*—that gives life to words and sends them enchanted winging into the world to find a rest in human hearts. Religious poetry asks for the precious thing *unction*, and that is just the quality this book does not possess, though it is lofty and truly devout.

"The Statue and Other Poems"[7] is another of the books which display some feeling for poetry and some accomplishment, but unless one can say more for a volume that sets out to be poetry than this very faint praise, it is naught. The poetically-minded should be of the readers of poetry rather than the makers of verse.

"Poems,"[8] by David James Mackenzie, has a certain energy which makes for swinging ballads, in which form he is best, but although obviously sensitive to beauty, neither has he the transfiguring touch.

KATHARINE TYNAN.

Novel Notes.

LITTLE PIERRE. By Anatole France. 7s. 6d. net. (John Lane.)

To the English translation of "The Works of Anatole France" a rendering of his "Little Pierre" has now been added, and lovers of the French humorist who have been subscribing to this edition will reckon its latest volume not the least among its treasures. For here we have the artist in letters, the master of irony and wit and wisdom, the veteran analyst, letting his thoughts stray back to the days of his nonage, recalling from a past now so distant the moods, the daydreams, the impressions of his childhood. It is said that the old, as they grow older, forget the middle years of their lives and remember with increasing vividness the earliest phases of their career, age in this way as in others betraying a special tenderness for what is young. Anatole France, if old in years, is still young in brain, but he certainly shows in this portrait of the lad whose adolescence he described in "Pierre Nozière" a disarming gentleness towards youth and all the associations of this example of youth, a gentleness that smiles indulgently over its naughtinesses and records faithfully and wistfully its vanities and its enthusiasms. Whether a piece of autobiography or fantasy in autobiographical form, there can be little doubt that "Little Pierre" gives us an insight into the mind of the town-bred child who was in manhood, decades later, to give us the savage satire of "Penguin Island" and the audacious comedy of "The Revolt of the Angels." Nor is it easy to think that even though Pierre's sweet mother and unworldly father may be inventions of art, there was not an actual counterpart for Mélanie, the old nurse, who is pictured here so affectionately. What may be welcome to readers accustomed to an Anatole

[2] "Poems by a Brother and Sister." 4s. net. (Humphrey Milford.)
[3] "Terpsichore and Other Poems." By H. T. Wade-Gery. 3s. 6d. net. (Golden Cockerel Press.)
[4] "Unfinished Poems." By Elizabeth Paul. 3s. 6d. net. (Fifield.)
[5] "Lyra Mutabilis." By Morley Roberts. 5s. net. (Blackwell.)
[6] "Glimpses of the Passion." By Richard Lytton Greaves. 1s. 3d., 2s. 6d. (Burns & Oates.)
[7] "The Statue and Other Poems." By Edwin Stanley James. (Erskine Macdonald.)
[8] "Poems." By David James Mackenzie. 5s. net. (Gowans & Gray.)

France who rips out the humbug from respectability and scoffs fearlessly at hypocrisy in all its forms is the sentiment which informs these recollections of earlier days, the kindliness which flashes light on every little secret corner of goodness in passing. And more familiar but equally welcome should be such confessions of experience casually dropped into the narrative as, "I have had as little commerce as possible with myself. . . . Know not thyself—that is the beginning of wisdom"; or, "All dead men are paupers"; or again, "Respect for old age does not come naturally to children." Whether this last apophthegm be true or not, Anatole France has shown a respect and something more for the childhood of Pierre Nozière; he has lavished the full battery of his genius on it, with the result, perhaps it is unnecessary to add, of a little masterpiece.

AN ENTHUSIAST. By E. Œ. Somerville. 8s. 6d. net. (Longmans.)

"The people in this story all view Ireland from different angles, and each speaks for him or herself, and not for me," says Miss E. Œ. Somerville in the preface to her new book. She has endeavoured, the preface explains, to keep a strict attitude of impartiality throughout, although she thinks that in impartiality there is "something arrogant, if not offensive. ". . . On one point only are we all agreed," Miss Somerville concludes, "in love for the country that bore us, that ardent country in which the cold virtue of impartiality is practically unknown." And so we get the story of the romance of Dan Palliser, an enthusiast and would-be reformer, told, if with impartiality, in such a manner as to grip one with an intensity, that makes his tragic ending give one a real pang of regret. It is a story full of laughter and tears and charm, in which every character is thoroughly alive. "Dan Palliser was of those whose opinions, once formed, were of disastrous tenacity—disastrous because his strong will held them with a force that limited their power of growth. He was of the fiery company of enthusiasts." The author's understanding of horses and dogs is no less than her understanding of human character: Peggy, a "cocker spaniel, fat and black," was "a coward, and afflicted—not without cause—by a chronic conviction of sin, as well as by a super-subtle perception of mood in those in authority over her." While Lizzie, the fox-terrier, is "small and misanthropic, with sore eyes and a bitter smile; a low-spirited yet indomitable little dog, who beyond the single stern passion that she cherished for Dan, hated human beings only a degree less than she loathed her fellows." It is one of the books it is a joy to linger over, and to remember long after it is read.

THREE LOVING LADIES. By the Hon. Mrs. Dowdall. 9s. net. (Duckworth.)

It is a pleasure to come across so fresh and strong a book as this. The reader is never in doubt that he is enjoying a clever transcript from real life and that the door is opened to him into the society of a typical present-day provincial town. Millport had an excellent idea of its own importance and self-sufficiency. It had a go-ahead, modern university and a most efficient municipal government. These were the centres of its life, and the town hall was the hub of the microcosm. The poor and intellectual studied political economy, and the rich and serious devoted themselves to "welfare" movements and the care of lunatics and destitute children. To this little Utopia came General Fulton, his wife and two daughters, and it is Mrs. Dowdall's business to tell us how this London household adapted itself to its new environment. Presently the two daughters had love affairs to distract them. Evangeline married her father's A.D.C., an efficient but priggish soldier who nearly broke his wife's heart by his views on the Spartan upbringing of his infant son. Captain Hatton, however, is punished and outwitted by the strategy of a misanthropic lady of the university. The story is a clever study of the subtleties of sex antagonism, lightly and very skilfully done and with an abundance of cynical humour. The characters are clearly and sharply presented, and cover a remarkable range—university professors, profiteers and their Cambridge sons, army men, amateur philanthropists, and social agitators. There is all the material for a capital comedy, and Mrs. Dowdall misses none of her chances. There is plenty of instructive criticism also in the book, which we commend to the reflection of the inhabitants of our numerous Millports.

CARROTY BROON. By A. S. Neill. 7s. 6d. net. (Herbert Jenkins.)

Once a dominie always a dominie! Mr. Neill has written a capital book about lassies and laddies, their little larks and loves and scrapes, and the hard and simple lives of their elders. But over all broods the intimidating shadow of unimaginative and repressive teachers! The dominie may be in doubt, but there is no doubt about the dominie! We like Mr. Neill's present book more than its predecessor. There is less lecturing in it. He does not trouble us with complexes and neuroses and other terrors of psycho-analysis. He writes from the children's point of view, and if he is a little too insistent on the terrors of school we easily forgive him, for we know his heart is in the right place. Mr. Neill is a genuine humorist; but perhaps his most humorous passage is that in which he describes himself as a realist—he, the arch-sentimentalist! The thousands who liked Wee Macgregor will certainly like the brave, engaging Carroty Broon.

THE FORGE OF DEMOCRACY. By Gabrielle Vallings. 8s. 6d. net. (Hutchinson.)

Gabrielle Vallings is to be congratulated on her new book, "The Forge of Democracy." It is not so much a war book as a book of war—war of human passions, of good and evil. The pictures of Belgium, writhing in the grip of the German Beast, are almost painfully well done, but it is the characters of Ottilie van Eynden and Madelaine Gault that lift the book out of the ordinary. The precisian may say, with some truth, that the author has not revised her book with sufficient care before handing it to the publishers; there are some clumsy sentences and a few positive inaccuracies. But the impression one gets is that such flaws are due to her eagerness to cut the cackle and come to the 'osses—a very blessed thing and passing rare among novelists. It is a more than interesting book. Ottilie, with her bastard son, born through the violation of a drunken soldier; and Madelaine, daughter of an English baronet, engaged to be married to, and subsequent mistress of, the German Military Attaché, suffer such agonies as remind us that the Great War was more than an affair of treaties. The other characters are well drawn, and the book is never dull. I commend it to those who are not afraid to have a time of great horror recalled to them in *words* that hurt because they tell of *things* that hurt grievously.

THE SHADOW OF THE EAST. By E. M. Hull. 8s. 6d. (Nash.)

Readers will do well to get hold of the name of E. M. Hull. This writer is likely to come into prominence before long, for she knows how to tell a strong, engrossing, powerful tale in a Dell-like way. You may sneer at the old idea of the strong man with a bitter past falling in love with his innocent ward, but Miss Hull relates the poignant story of Barry Craven with sufficient passion and intensity to silence criticism. This is a real good story, packed with detail and incident. Whether the scene be Japan, or an English country house, or a burning desert, it is sketched in boldest colour. Barry felt he could not confess his sin; Gillian, his wife only in name, almost died of hunger in Paris—ah, yes, this is romance, sure enough; full-blooded, absorbing romance. "'But can you forgive—can you bear to come to me?' he faltered, still only half believing. 'I love you,' she said simply, 'and life without you is death,' and lifting her face to his she gave him the lips he had not dared to take."

XUM

THE SOULS OF POOR FOLK. By Dr. Alexander Irvine. 7s. 6d. (Collins.)

Dr. Alexander Irvine will not take it amiss when we tell him that his book of Ulster reminiscence reminded us more than once of "A Window in Thrums." Anna and Jamie are as lovable in their way as Hendry and Jess. Especially winsome is the account of the old man's present to his aged wife. "Jamie scraped together for weeks and months, enough money to furnish the one surprise of their later life. . . . Every market day he was seen around the second-hand furniture stall in the market-place. . . . It was a chair for Anna!" "The Candle in the Window" is also a fine piece of writing. It was lit for an absent son, who understood all too late the love that placed it there. This collection of sketches is slight and unambitious, but it is well worth reading. We pause with pleasure over the highly significant sentences:—"My old town still lingers in the rear of progress, but it has changed. Even the poorest of the poor have now enough to eat."

THREADS. By Frank Stayton. 8s. (Thornton Butterworth).

Mr. Frank Stayton has chosen a theme that has in it elements of both tragedy and comedy, but he has developed it with such deftness and ironic humour that the threatened tragedy loses itself in comedy and the comedy closes on a note of charming sentiment. John Osborne Wynn has been sentenced to death for a murder of which he was innocent, and the sentence is commuted to imprisonment for life. His wife, at his desire, drops his surname, passes as a widow, and never holds any communication with him, in order that she and her children may not remain under the shadow of his shame. Then at the end of fifteen years the real murderer confesses, and Wynn unexpectedly returns home. His children have no recollection of him; his wife, a delightfully attractive woman, has had more than one suitor, and is now keeping one at bay, not daring to explain why it is impossible for her to accept him. This sudden return of the husband and father disorganises everything; there is no place for him in the household, and it looks as if his return must end in disaster. But he accepts the position with an amused, worldly-wise cynicism, and presently realises that his only chance of happiness is to enter into rivalry with his wife's faithful suitor and win her from him. The whole thing is written lightly, with shrewd, epigrammatic touches of wit and humour, and the result—well, it is altogether worth while reading the book to find that out for yourself. The story is so essentially dramatic in conception that one is not surprised to learn it has already been translated into a play and will be produced this month at the St. James's Theatre by Mr. Lyn Harding.

PRINCESS SALOME. By Burris Jenkins. 7s. (Lippincott.)

A brilliant, highly-coloured bit of writing, which will appeal to those who care to read tales of Bible characters. It is a romance concerning the life of Stephen, and brings in the story of Christ and His sufferings. . . . "His face was not shining with the rain, but seemed to shine with something better than the rain. His purple-black hair and beard were made bright with the strange light in the face . . . in his twisted girdle hung a draw-knife; in his right hand he bore an adze, resting it upon his shoulder." Mr. Jenkins revels in the picturesque, the dramatic and the tragic, and gives us a lurid sketch of Judas Iscariot: "Nose and chin met, he was bent; red robe soiled and torn, clutched a purse." Stephen's martyrdom is also described in strong and glowing language.

The Bookman's Table.

STREETS. By Douglas Goldring. (Selwyn & Blount.)

In dedicating his poems to "Lovers of London," Mr. Goldring calls them a "ragged offering." The description is just, for his verses are for the most part rather roughly written. They lack the ultimate rightness of perfect art, but they have the quality of good sketches. Most of these poems are reprinted from volumes which have gone out of print. Some of them date back as far as 1908; nor is there any noticeable difference of temper or technique between earlier and later pieces. Mr. Goldring may be said to belong to the pre-Georgian era. He shows none of the characteristics of the latest school of poetry. The influences which appear in his work are those of Henley and Housman, Symons and the earlier Masefield. He does not mind being readily intelligible. He deals with the simple, obvious themes which have always, until just lately, been considered the worthiest for poetic treatment. He has not that horror of sentimentality which makes so much contemporary verse so arid. All this makes his poetry very refreshing. Mr. Goldring may not be so accomplished in his line as Miss Edith Sitwell is in hers; but he is far pleasanter company. To go from "Wheels" to "Streets" is like returning from Wyndham Lewis to Sickert. One experiences the same sense of relief. Of his vivid impressionism here is a happy example:

"At Jack Straw's Castle, streaks of yellow light
Pour from the bar upon a preacher's head
Who howls unheeded warnings to the night:
Two p'licemen say he ought to be in bed.

"Lovely young men walk, eager, to and fro
And search the passing faces—some find mates;
Against the railings lean a giggling row;
An amorous chauffeur puffs his horn and waits.

"The crowds move up and down, white dresses gleam;
Some strolling niggers play a tune that trips,
While couples meet and glance, then leave the stream,
And youths look plaintively at young girl's lips."

There are many such carelessly drawn but effective pictures in this book, which really do give one a sense of the real London. And sometimes the vision goes deeper—as in "Living-In (Brixton Rise)":

"Through the small window comes the roar
Of all the world of light outside;
It is not midnight, yet our door
Is shut on us, and we are tied.

"What is he doing now—my dear?
I left him all on fire for me:
Will he be true? Oh, God, I fear
He'll buy what I would give him free."

One quotes what is easily quotable; but the pieces here given are to be taken as representative specimens and not as the finest flowers of Mr. Goldring's work.

TEACHING THE MOTHER TONGUE. By Philip Boswood Ballard, M.A., D.Lit. 4s. 6d. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

This book may be described without any reservation as the most sensible contribution to practical education that has appeared for many a day. Business men used to distinguish between "bankers' discount" and "schoolmasters' discount"—schoolmasters themselves, of course, called the latter sort "true discount." They would. So there has always been, since the beginning of compulsory education, what may be called "schoolmasters' English." Once it included much grammar; and then presently it included no grammar; but the more it changed the more it was the same old thing. Mr. Ballard, who writes with knowledge and experience, here attacks schoolmasters' English. He ridicules many school fads and fetishes and we think he is unchallengeably right. We are inclined to put our view of the volume in some such way as this: Here is a little book costing four-and-six. It is well written and excellent to read. Above all it is really, vitally practical. The sincerity of teachers in the work of education can be measured by the extent to which they buy it and apply it. That is a "mental test"; and we think mental tests are very fashionable just now in educational circles.

REVIEWS AND CRITICAL PAPERS. By Lionel Johnson. Edited with an Introduction by Robert Shafer. 6s. net. (Elkin Mathews.)

Lionel Johnson was not a great or even an important writer; but he was an interesting and attractive writer, and there will always be a public for his work. We have pleasure, therefore, in calling the attention of bookmen to this delightful volume of bookishness. It is a series of reviews contributed to *The Academy* and *The Outlook* in the nineties and it offers an excellent example of current journalism touched with grace and scholarship. The subjects are nearly all interesting to the present-day reader, some because they are alive and some because they were alive. There are three reviews of Kipling (all the articles are reviews of specific volumes), one of Stevenson, one of John Davidson, one of William Norris, one of Mrs. Humphry Ward, one of George Meredith, one of Austin Dobson, and one of Richard Le Gallienne. What the nineties thought of the nineties may therefore here be discovered with pleasure and profit to all. The volume should be not merely interesting but instructive to our *jeunes feroces*, one of whom the other day was denouncing Meredith's "Love in the Valley" as a vile product of the nineties, although it happens to belong to the fifties. But we must not expect too much of our *jeunes feroces*. They must live. However, those who sometimes tire of their hebdomadal hysterics will be glad to turn for a change to such a volume as this in which criticism, though keen, does not forget to be creative.

TOWN GARDENING. By Mary Hampden. (The Home Garden Books No. 2.) 6s. (Thornton Butterworth.)

"A woman who yearns to cultivate flowers for the house," says Miss Hampden encouragingly, "can do it surprisingly well with no better aids than a sunny balcony, boxes, pots, and sheets of glass. . . . This book aims at giving such plain instructions and valuable hints that the ignoramus can start flower culture with every prospect of success." We speedily discover that our author has common sense: "If the Virginian creeper is a gorgeous drapery, for Heaven's sake let the tapestry hang, and do not plant puny wistarias and clematis instead." There are excellent sections on the different months of the year, a chapter on choosing the right plants, shrubs, bulbs, etc., on preparing garden soil, on planting and potting, on seeds and cuttings, etc. There are also scores of ingenious and valuable suggestions: such as how to make a flower table for a sunny window; how to deter cats of the vicinity from enjoying the garden; and so on. Miss Hampden recommends common thrift for an edging for suburban beds and borders. She is also a firm friend of the German iris. She says in her chapter on Perennials and Biennials, that a town garden all hollyhocks, daffodils and pinks would be attractive from spring till autumn. We agree. And we recommend readers who are timid and unambitious to read her paragraphs on window boxes. The charming illustrations will spur them on to fresh effort.

BOOKLAND. By W. H. King. 3s. 6d. net. (George Philip.)

"Bookland" is a volume in the New Era Library, edited by Mr. Ernest Young and designed for use in schools. In 250 pages Mr. King describes the general course of English literature with special reference to the outstanding figures who are landmarks in the great region of native song and story. It is admirably done. The descriptions are just of the kind to make the young pupil want to go on and read more, and that is precisely what such a book should do. Here and there Mr. King gives illustrative quotations—the limits of space prevent him from giving much—and what he gives is most felicitously chosen. We like his quotations from Chaucer (in the original) but we think he wouid have assisted the youthful reader had he marked the sounded "e's" and the unusual stresses in certain words; and we wish he had not utterly omitted Langland. Considered as what it is meant to be, a book for the young, it fulfils its purpose and can be recommended to all concerned.

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XUM

Music.

THREE MUSICAL INNOVATORS.

BY A. EAGLEFIELD HULL.

I. CYRIL SCOTT.

Photo by Elliott & Fry. **Mr. Cyril Scott.**

CYRIL SCOTT was born in Liverpool forty-three years ago. This means that he entered music at a time when it was necessary to study in Germany, if musical talents were to have an opportunity of realising their fullest possibilities. To Frankfort he went at the age of twelve, where in addition to hearing all kinds of music, he studied with a remarkable teacher of composition—Ivan Knorr, a Russian. These eight years at Frankfort were chiefly valuable for the artistic friendships then formed. Poets, musicians, artists and philosophers all reacted on one another, and new ideas seemed to drop as though out of the air. Then it was that he picked up a remark from a college friend, which has stuck in his mind ever since—"If you want to be a musical composer you must invent a style."

At twenty-one we find Scott back in Liverpool with a "Symphony" and a "Heroic Suite" to his credit, neither however showing promise of a remarkable individuality. The "Piano Quartet" which Kreisler and his party played at the Broadwood concerts was another matter, and so was the orchestral "Aubade" given at Darmstadt, Dresden and Berlin. All Scott's larger works, by the way, had to receive their baptism abroad.

It was about this time that Scott began to compose piano pieces, and the subjects ("Lotus Land," "Sphinx," "Two Eastern Songs," etc.) give indication of a new and enthralling interest—occultism and Eastern mysticism—which has continued to hold him, as strongly as music, ever since.

Everything created, says Emerson, has its painter or its poet. Like the enchanted princess of the fairy tales, it awaits its predestined liberator. The pianoforte has three souls or genii—that of the dulcimer, that of the harp and that of the clavichord. Bach discovered the latter; the Irishman, John Field, gave Chopin the key to the harp-soul; and it remained for Cyril Scott to reveal the genius of the dulcimer. No one of this trinity of qualities is before or after another. Cyril Scott's appeal to the dulcimer spirit of the "hammer-clavier" is more primitive perhaps than the others. The old-fashioned duet, playfully entitled "Chop-sticks," is only one remove from the gipsy's box of wires struck with a hammer in each hand. Simple as the recognition of this fact seems, it was sufficiently far-reaching in Scott's conception of piano music to exasperate all the critics, who piled accusations of posing and all kinds of vituperations on the head of the composer who dared to alter the piano style of Beethoven, Chopin and Mozart.

Let it be admitted once for all that the keyboard is not made on the system of the diatonic scale but on the semitonal one. Cyril Scott was the first to explore the full recognition of this principle and consequently produce a new style of melody, a different system of harmony, another touch and fingering and even a new notation, one which abolishes major and minor keys with all the sharps and flats resulting therefrom. Now this is not evolution but revolution, and it says much for the swift current of music during the last fifteen years that when Scott played his Piano Concerto at the British Music Society's Festival in June this year, whereas the first and last movements sounded as virile as ever, the middle movement dated badly, and felt mannered and threadbare. Nevertheless Cyril Scott led the Neo-British group of composers which arose in the nineties, and the beauty, originality and strength of much of his music will easily outlive the present generation. Even were it not so, it would nevertheless have left its impress and have formed a new school of British composers for "house-music," a form which has ever been as congenial to the British people as opera to our Continental brethren.

Whereas Debussy in France, and Diagilieff with his Russian Ballet, did not lack followers in their challenge of the great German classics, Scott was in the nineties a solitary voice in the wilderness of British music crying for a re-valuation of Beethoven and a widening out of the musical territories. He occasionally became extravagant and, being made much of in society, indulged at times in mannerisms and a probably unconscious pose; but his art-principles were steady enough and his fastidious musical taste, applied as sternly to his own works as to others, caused him to be always finding new realms to conquer. "It is better to learn of something new than to be told of what we already know," he wrote.

Although the general public knows only one style of Cyril Scott's music, and that the most facile and least representative, his works have a greater variety than is the rule with creative composers. Thus the pieces most often heard are the "Danse Negre" (a little like Debussy), "Water Wagtail," "Vesperale," "Chansonette" and "Evening Idyll." Amongst the songs, "My Captain," "A Blackbird Song," "The Rondel of Rest" and "The Little Bells of Sevilla." His finer and larger pieces ought to appear regularly in the programmes of our concert recitalists, who will never have full houses again until they get out of the rut of the Bach-Beethoven-Chopin-Liszt rigmarole. Amongst Scott's best works the "Sonata," a work with no fixed tonality, stands pre-eminent. In the fast movement, the "Scherzo" is

raised to a superior power. It is a terpsichorean expression on some higher plane than the physical. Both Scriabin and Scott are successful here in achieving an adumbration of that phenomenon which Carpenter calls Cosmic Consciousness. Each attains it in his own way—Scriabin through his peculiar harmonies derived from colour, and Scott through his free use of a new scale—the dodecuple. The final fugue is a veritable *tour de force*.

Harmony is of prime importance with Scott. It is never cloying, but always vital, opalescent and varied in hue. Not only are his chords delicious in their sequential connection, but almost each one is a gem of euphony in itself. This use of harmony is best exemplified in the "Jungle Book Impressions," whilst a deeper, subtler harmonic use is felt in the suite called "Egypt" and in the lovely set of "Five Poems" (Schott). His love of arabesquing is heard at its best in "Paradise Birds," "Rainbow Trout," "Sea Marge," "Danse Languoreuse" and the "Diatonic Study," which by the way is not diatonic at all.

There is rare feeling in nearly all his songs. Suffice it to mention "Mirage" with its soothing, magnetic beauty, the lovely "My Lady Sleeps," the virile "A Song of Wine," the unspeakably touching "An Old Song Ended" and the entrancing "White Knight," with its pictorial suggestion of the galloping of horses. Deeply sincere and impressive are "A Gift of Silence," "Love's Aftermath" and the eloquent setting of Christina Rossetti's "For a Dream's Sake." In a more advanced style are the "Autumn Song," the "Villanelle of the Poet's Road" with its original harmonies, and "The Moon Maiden" with its bantering queries and answers. Amongst the very best of his songs are the two early poems, "Voices of Vision" and "Willows," written in 1903, both wonderfully daring in richness of texture and originality of setting. Entirely new modes of expression were opened up in the "Two Chinese Songs" ("Waiting" and "A Picnic") where the oriental feeling is delightfully reproduced. The first approaches the enharmonic system as nearly as possible with a twelve-note scale; the second with its rattling accompaniment of musical "chopsticks" is more favoured by singers.

There is however another type of song to which Cyril Scott occasionally turns, and this is the folk-song. To omit any mention of his activity in this direction would be to ignore some of his happiest inspirations. Nothing could be more truly pathetic than the musical atmosphere to his setting of that exquisitely tender lyric, "The Sands of Dee," so entirely unlike the way in which it has been set before. Solely through the means of a folk-song-like melody and varying harmony, Scott has brought forth the unspeakably simple pathos of Kingsley's poem. Nor has the simplicity suffered by a judicious use of modern harmonic device. The final cadence is new and yet retentive of an older world simplicity. Another example, but of a different nature, is the "Tyrolese Evensong." Here Scott has wandered into the folk element of another country and presented us with an undeniable Tyrolese Mazurka for the piano, with a sad, sustained song-melody woven into the texture of its prevalent gaiety.

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XUM

An unerring taste in poetry is the necessary concomitant of the song composer. One cannot set an auctioneer's catalogue to music, as Strauss seems to think. The perfect lyricist is prevented by a sense of fitness, if not by intuition, from choosing unsuitable material. And so it comes about that in a composer's choice of lyrics, as in his leanings towards various poets, one gets an index to his music, valuable not only to the critic and to the appreciator, but also to the interpreter of the songs and the accompanist.

Cyril Scott's choice wanders over an immense field—from the "Scotch Lullaby" of Walter Scott to the Greek lays of W. R. Patten. The two poets who have the most impelled Scott's responsive muse to utterance are Ernest Dowson and Rosamund Marriott Watson. In Dowson's "Villanelle of the Poet's Road," "Love's Aftermath," "A Song of Arcady," "Pierrot and the Moonmaiden," and many others, Scott has indeed found himself moved to some of his finest expressions. Mrs. Watson makes a no less powerful appeal to him. "The Unforeseen," "Autumn's Lute," "Invocation," "Prelude" and "Nocturne"—too musical in themselves for many composers to attempt the task successfully—have found in Cyril Scott an interpreter of rare delight. Giles's translations from the Chinese have also caught the composer's mood, and in the "Two Chinese Songs" ("Waiting" and "A Picnic") we find the actual counterparts of the composer's moods of the "Piano Concerto," "Poppies," etc.

In all these poets it is as if Cyril Scott found his own soul-states faithfully mirrored. The delicate, sad grace of Dowson, the strong, rugged emotion of Walt Whitman, the quaint simplicity of older poets like George Darley, and the delicate other-world romance of Dante Gabriel Rossetti appeal almost equally to him. In his wide, eclectic choice of poems he reveals an unerring instinct, and he does not make the common mistake of thinking that every poem is equally good.

Scott's latest works, a "Concert Rondeau" and a "Ballade," both for piano solo, show a further increase of expression and invention.

Though he frequently writes for orchestra, Scott is not really a "large canvas" man. He is *par excellence* a musician for the smaller concert-room and the home music-room. The "large canvas" composers like Wagner and Strauss, Elgar and Stanford, are often in an awkward predicament when asked to "play a tune" on the piano, as Elgar and Bantock were at the opening of a music-room at Birmingham University. The younger composers are not so easily caught out. Scott is a remarkably fine pianist and his works are heard at their best only when the composer is at the piano. He is, too, a very interesting lecturer, who revels in epigrams in real G. B. S. style.

For the information of the reader, all Cyril Scott's music is published either by Messrs. Schott & Co. or by Messrs. Elkin & Son.

MUSIC FOR THE MILLION.

The young and uninfluential composer with a potboiler to sell, voyaging round from publishing house to publishing house, discovers sooner or later that he is out of his bearings. His trouble is that he lacks a definition. He learns this from the smaller publishers, with whom he comes into personal contact. (The larger publishers of music for the million he does not see; they live in ancient strongholds, protected from new ideas by a thousand office boys.) The MS. under his arm is honest and competent. It is as sincere as work can be that is consciously honest and competent. It has a good tune, respectable words, an accompaniment that can be played by a reasonably accomplished child, and even, slyly concealed, certain modernisms that at least distinguish it harmonically from Hymns Ancient and Modern. In a word, it is not cynical. Probably the young composer prefers to set lyrics of futurist passion with accompaniment laid out for piccolo, bass tuba and eight side drums; but he recognises that modernisms will not satisfy the baker nor genius the milkman. Hence his potboiler, for which he feels neither more nor less contempt than would be felt by a cabinet-maker compelled by necessity to turn out a sound kitchen table. His difficulty is the publisher and his eternal advice, "You must study what the public wants, my boy." The implication is that the publisher knows what the public wants and that he can satisfy the demand if he will. The obvious retort is, "If you know what is wanted and have it, why don't you publish it?" For it is obvious that a good many months have passed since the publication of any song, good or bad, that has found its way into a hundred thousand homely music cabinets. And that is the goal of music for the million. The problem is not of the concert platform. The popular concert public will accept almost anything, good or bad, if it be well sung by popular favourites; but it will carry home only such things as it can itself perform to its own satisfaction.

The fact is that the publisher does not in the least know what the public wants. This is not particularly surprising since, as Edward Bok remarks in his Autobiography, "The public, while it knows what it wants when it sees it, cannot clearly express its wants, and never wants the thing it does ask for, although it thinks it does at the time." In the hope of correctly diagnosing the taste of the moment the publisher floods the market with crowds of so-called ballads, for the majority of which the practised singer, keenly on the alert for future favourites, knows that there is only one possibility—oblivion. Of the remainder some secure a brief quasi-popularity by advertisement and the pernicious royalty-singer system; and perhaps one achieves the success which ensures colossal sales. Either possible successes are not being written, or, if they are, the publisher will not look for them or cannot recognise them when he sees them. Presumably he has some selective principles, but, except for two rule-of-thumb standards, observation fails to discover what they are. These two, and probably all the others, if any, are founded in an intense conservatism. The first has about it a certain business sense. "So and so," observes the complacent man, "has made a success. Retain his services for ever. At least his name will sell." Probably it does; yet how many composers are there who, having hit the popular taste once, follow their one success with song after song, not one of which would even moderately succeed with an unknown name on the cover. The second obvious principle has also some sense, but apparently much less than the publisher dreams. He remembers what the public liked yesterday, he sees what the public likes to-day. He assumes that it will like the same thing to-morrow. Hence the dismal series of imitative failures that trail in the wake of every big success. The public may be an ass, but it is not a stationary ass. It walks—perhaps round and round, but it walks. And it appreciates a change of diet. The publishing failure arises from the mistake of this continual looking at yesterday and to-day instead of trying to get the focus of to-morrow. It is a failure that matters, for there is a demand for popular songs and there is no reason why the demand should not be worthily supplied. There is, particularly at the present distinctly transitional moment, a great opening for the

publisher who will produce to-morrow's songs to-day, who will attempt to get a step in front of the public taste instead of trailing behind, laden with the stale wares of yesterday and the day before.

These remarks are prompted by the dialogue at present to be heard in every concert-singer's room: "Have you come across anything good?" "No. Just the usual old stuff," and by a very miscellaneous bundle of songs from a variety of houses. These may be at once grouped into various classes. They are all ephemeral. None of them particularly matter. They differ in detail but are alike in their obvious attempt to catch the million. The first group might be called the blatant attempts. "My Love," by Churchill Sibley (The Musical Exchange), is thoroughly old-fashioned. All over it is the mark of the organist. It is characterised by its symphonies ending in descending staccato arpeggios, that remind one of the skip of a music-hall comedienne leaving the stage. "My Little Heart of May," by Geoffrey Gwyther (Chappell), is pretty enough but of an enervating sentimentality. "Dying Embers" (Augener), in spite of the name, Oscar Merikanto, and the standing of the publishers, is reminiscent in the melody, thickly emphasised in the left hand, and the trite harmonies, of ditties of the Christie Minstrel era. One wonders why it was necessary to do it into English and how Mischa Leon came to sing it. The second group, though undistinguished, are a welcome relief from these banalities. They attempt to get a little out of the rut. "Cargoes" (Chappell), a setting by Coningsby Clark of Masefield's well-known verses—a list of fifteen lines without a verb—realises their more obvious rhythms but makes no attempt to catch their atmosphere of exotic opulence. "The Lonely Flower," by W. H. Bowyer (Renaissance Publishing Co.), is a good example of a song with an ordinary enough tune fitted, very loosely, with a vaguely modernistic accompaniment which helps it little in its irrelevant wanderings. "My Master Hath a Garden," by Geoffrey Gwyther (Chappell), is melodious and has pretty seventeenth-century words. There is a curious effect, however, of a lack of any connection between the two. The tune asks for other and modern words, and the words for a setting more in period. The third group includes "The Ragman," George Buchanan (Leonard), "Yours Alone," May Brahe (Enoch), "The One White Rose," Breville Smith (Leonard), and "Moon-Daisies," Eric Coates (Chappell). They are all frank and competent repetitions, singable and modestly effective, which have at the least the merit of entire and naïve frankness and a disarming honesty of purpose. Standing alone is "A Devon Idyll," by G. O'Connor-Morris (Enoch), more accomplished than any of the foregoing songs and dangerous in its accomplishment. The work of a clever musician, it is thoroughly insincere in its mixture of pretentiousness and banality. The phrases concluding each half-verse have all the cynicism of stale rhymes.

No. There is still room for the composer who will treat directly simple and direct words, set them honestly for what they are worth, and no more, and so make the real music for the million. It is worth doing.

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XUM

The Drama.

THE ART OF THE GRAND GUIGNOL.

By GRAHAM SUTTON.

Photo by Claude Harris.

Mr. José Levy,
Managing Director of the Little Theatre.

WHEN Miss Sybil Thorndike was passing through The Yellow Room on her way from Euripides to the Grand Guignol, the public attitude to the new venture was pathetically typical. We all knew just what it would be like: we had seen "Grand Giggle" parodies at the Theatrical Garden Party; or if not, our sound British instinct was enough to warn us what "these decadent French plays" were bound to be. Thus the more cultured critics, who had a genuine appreciation of Miss Thorndike's art, wrote jeremiads on its impending prostitution. The rest, like the Fat Boy whom they never tire of quoting (no doubt because his mentality is so much their own), gloated in smug anticipation of the horrible: they too appreciated Miss Thorndike—in their fashion; that is, they felt confident that her art could be relied on to wring the last drop of beastliness from the beastliest theme.

The mere wrongness of this public attitude mattered very little: its prematurity mattered a great deal. For theatrical managers ("needy and desperate men," as Shaw once called them) cannot wholly ignore their public's preconceived opinion; it is their fingerpost, if they would tread the beaten track; if they would innovate, it tends only to disturb them and confuse their aim. Some such confusion has been evident in the Grand Guignol's plays. As a rule they are robust enough to sustain a certain morbidity; here and there, however, morbidity has seemed superimposed for cheap effect, like afterthoughts thumbed into his main structure by an unskilful sculptor, too liable to fall away at the least touch. This fault, for the reason suggested above, was more noticeable in earlier programmes: from the third bill it was entirely eliminated: in the present series it peeps out again. Even so, a good deal of morbidity has been read into the plays by audiences themselves. Folk who are out for sensationalism will find all they can; some of them, one suspects, would scent purple passion in "As You Like It," and detect sordid reality (their pet phrase) in "Charley's Aunt." With such a public it is inevitable that the Grand Guignol should be praised as well as damned for the wrong reasons. But the new management is wiser than its friends; despite certain lapses, it has progressed steadily towards its own objective, and can now challenge criticism as a distinct essay in dramatic art.

Putting aside, then, as something transient and superficial the mere chamber-of-horrors critical attitude, we may discover the real significance of the Grand Guignol in the distinct school of craftsmanship which it evokes. Its principles, whether in comedy or tragedy, are the same. Its comedy is the sort of thing one might get in a music-hall in heaven (or if you take the other view of music-hall art, in hell: at all events, in whatever land of promise the ideal music-hall is ultimately to be found). It is realistic, racy, intimate to the life which we all live; Shaw's brilliant artificiality and the red-nosed egotism of Robey are alike remote from it; it has no stars, its characters contending equally, all against all. In its tragedy the same impartiality is no less evident; too often, "strong" drama tends to radiate from a central character—but real life is not like that, save in the callow imagination of romantic youth; nor is it so at the Grand Guignol. In "Seven Blind Men" the tragic sequel springs from mistakes and misunderstandings on both sides, not simply (as in melodrama) from the unredeemed harshness of a stage-tyrant on the one hand, nor from the unreasoning folly of a stage-socialist on the other. So in "The Kill" the issues are so nicely balanced that, given a good Count and a poor Catherine, our sympathies might sway to the Count's side. As it was, Mr. Lauderdale Maitland was so superlatively good as the Count that his big speech nearly won us: and then Miss Thorndike had her say—! Which brings one to the question of acting.

In this kind, the acting is of supreme importance. Poorly played, Grand Guignol comedy would be tame, its tragedy farcical. To call Miss Thorndike the best emotional actress in London is not only a truism: it is inadequate. Most London reputations perch themselves on the ability to play one narrow line of parts extremely well—to "be oneself," in short: an art which, in comparison with Miss Thorndike's, is not acting at all. For the Grand Guignol this is not enough: Miss Thorndike's work shews endless facets of imagination, by look and action no less than by the spoken word. The heartbreaking tenderness of her smile in "The Love Child," the soul-weariness of her Catherine, her chill, deadly wisdom as she rounds "The Triangle"—these things live in the memory long after the spoken word has passed away. After "The Kill," her performance as The Chemist's customer was almost an outrage; yet it was too good to wish away: half-witted, leering, cunning without intellect and self-confident without self-respect, it was as surely touched with greatness as the rest.

Yet she is in no sense a star. In the realistic type of play, sensationalism results no less inevitably from the star system than from the bad acting which at the Grand Guignol is so ruthlessly eliminated. The real "thrills" at the Little Theatre are those thrills of almost painful delight which the best acting, and the best only, can give. And they are there continually—in the rich mellow vitality of Mr. Bealby's

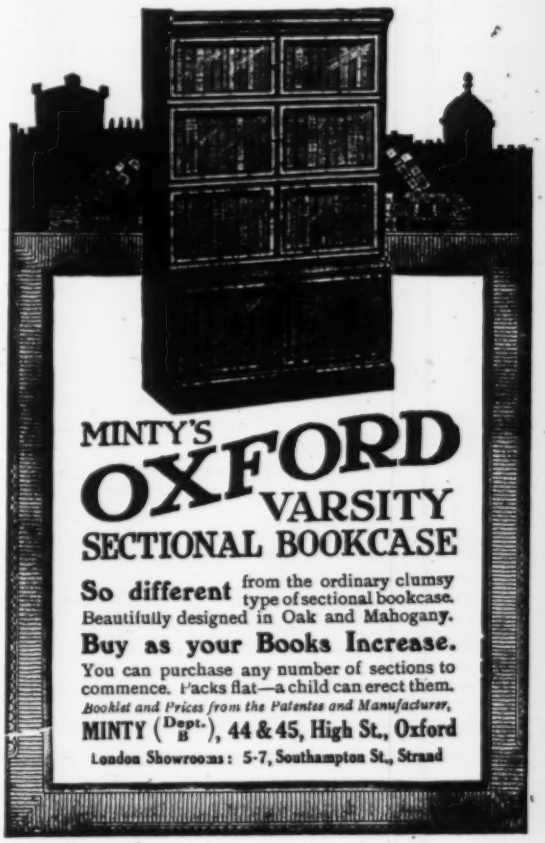
Césaire: the sodden huskiness of Mr. Maitland's Foxey: the malice of Mr. Pease's Knox, which revealed the almost visible workings of a mind lamed by physical disablement—the real tragedy of blindness. Yet, when all is said, the chief glory of the Grand Guignol Company is still its team-work—that rare fusion of writing, acting and production which remains the crowning excellence of drama as an art-form. In "Seven Blind Men" the crescendo of mob-panic was as fine a piece of concerted acting as one could wish to see; one of the most exquisite individual performances was that of Miss Oates as Mrs. Peacemeal, who throughout the length of "The Love Child" dominated its action without uttering a single word. After this, to grudge our best talent to the Grand Guignol, as recent critics have done, is to miss altogether its value as a school of acting; the high standard it demands cannot fail to reinvigorate the actor's art.

Two recent comedies, "Rounding the Triangle" and "Shepherd's Pie," are as good stuff as anything that Mr. Levy has given us. Yet I have drawn mainly on the third series of plays for illustration, because that series seems to me the highwater mark of the Grand Guignol's art so far. The first play of the present bill, "Latitude 15° South," suffers by comparison with "Seven Blind Men" because it relies on the same theme of cumulative terror, not quite so sharply done. The case of "The Old Women" is, technically speaking, more interesting: many critics damn it as too horrible, though it is no more gruesome than "The Kill"; may not the fault lie rather in the fact that it is not sufficiently dramatic to support the horror which it contains? The war taught us, willy-nilly, to become brutishly indifferent to mere horror; so that unless backed by high dramatic artistry, the play of horror tends nowadays to be simply tedious—as this is. Mr. Levy contends, rightly, that he cannot over-horrify his audiences: but he may bore them. The point is interesting because it indicates the chief pitfall in the Grand Guignol's path; in "The Kill," as previously in "The Hand of Death," the new management has shewn how fine, with fine craftsmanship, the play of horror may be; but it must turn a resolutely deaf ear to certain of its friends; their fathers, within living memory, used to "improve" "Hamlet" by the addition of real blood; but the Grand Guignol is too good for them to turn into a penny gaff.

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN."

Mr. John Drinkwater.

THE fact that Mr. John Drinkwater's now famous play, which was originally written for the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, should after the lapse of three years find a home at the Lyceum, is not without significance. Lyceum audiences are used to a more highly-seasoned fare. And yet the discrepancies between the two classes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XUM

of entertainment are not perhaps so great as might at first be imagined. The central figure of melodrama is invariably that of some heroic man struggling successfully against overwhelming odds. That is the theme of "Abraham Lincoln." It ought not to detract from the dramatic value of the play that the author is a poet—that is to say one who is as equally concerned with the presentation of his theme as with the theme itself.

"Abraham Lincoln," it seems, has come to stay. There is every reason to believe that the success achieved at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, will be repeated at the Lyceum. There does exist, it appears, even in the heart of London, a real demand for intelligent drama. That may be reckoned as one of the discoveries of the Peace.

That the play has a strong appeal for the average theatre-goer is proved by the crowds who resort nightly to the Lyceum. For the student it has an added interest. It is a valuable experiment in a new type of drama—a type that will possess considerably more freedom and fluidity than the three- or four-act plays to which we have grown accustomed. Mr. Drinkwater has boldly broken with many of the old conventions. His play is frankly episodic, though the effect of continuity is partly secured by the intervention of the "messenger"—a personage who corresponds to the chorus in Greek tragedy—between the scenes. It is a novel method of theatrical presentation; but it is justified by its results, since it serves to focus the attention of the audience the more closely upon the central character.

And if "Abraham Lincoln" is very largely a series of episodes, what magnificent episodes they are! Where in modern drama will you find anything finer than that stirring scene in the farm-house near Appotomax or a situation more tense than that in which Lincoln, in the face of the opposition of his Cabinet, decides to reinforce the troops at Fort Sumter? I do not claim perfection for the play, but I do claim that it is one of the very few plays written during the last ten years that are likely to prove permanent acquisitions to our national drama.

The part of Lincoln is still played by Mr. William J. Rea. It is a fine study, full of force and character, though Mr. Rea occasionally lost some of his best effects by over-deliberation. Of the other players, some excellent work was done by Mr. Felix Aylmer, Mr. Harcourt Williams, Mr. William Armstrong, Miss Cathleen Orford, Miss Mary Raby, and Mr. Joseph A. Dodd. The last-named actor undertook a triple part with conspicuous success.

T. M. P.

JAMES THE LESS. A play in three acts. By C. A. Castell. Aldwych Theatre.

Although "James the Less" could not be described as a great play, I do not know that one always desires a great play—especially in weather that makes one's collar cling lovingly to one's neck. Be that as it may, I enjoyed Mr. C. A. Castell's play at the Aldwych. There was enough fun to keep one good humoured, and several times people said things that were quite pungent. The action of the play, moreover, called for some skill in stagecraft, and the actors came in and out like human beings instead of marionettes. For years I have watched Mr. Owen Nares with a good deal of interest. I think the first lead I saw him play was in "Old Heidelberg" and I thought then, as I think now, that there are big things ahead of him. In "James the Less" he had a part that did not fit him everywhere, but he just managed to avoid bathos at one or two points where another man would have overdone it. His whole performance was a very finished piece of acting, and I could have wished that Miss Joan Maclean (Rosamund) had been able to make a little more of the opportunities he gave her. Still, it is not easy to play a seventeen-year-old girl and a strong, silent woman at the same time, which was apparently what she was expected to do. She is very pretty and graceful, and should be allowed to make the most of those attributes. Miss Mary Rorke (Mary) was of course a joy, as she always is. Can one say more? Before this appears the play will be "off," but it was good enough to be worth a record.

F. D. G.

A DOLL'S HOUSE at Everyman's.

"'A Doll's House'" (says that acute critic and humanist, Mr. Havelock Ellis) "contains Ibsen's most elaborate portrait of a woman, and is his chief contribution to the elucidation of the questions relating to the social functions and position of women in the modern world." This is surely an amazing judgment; for Ibsen's elucidation of these questions, as presented in this concrete instance, amounts to nothing more than this—to a belief that a woman who all her married life has been merely her husband's toy, in addition to being a flirt, a liar and a thief, can suddenly develop a sense of responsibility, awaken to a realisation of her higher instincts and become the standard-bearer of her sex's rights. Bewildered by such a conversion, the ordinary man borrows the phrase of another of Ibsen's characters and says, "Such things don't happen." He regards the final act of "A Doll's House" as an example of feminist propaganda rather than of naturalistic drama; or he conceives it as an undue concession to that element of surprise at any price which is the hall-mark of the well-made play. Certainly "A Doll's House" is as symmetrical as any drama from Sardou's pen. It gives the actors abundant opportunities; and of these the company of Everyman's Theatre took full advantage. The Krogstad of Mr. Brember Wills, the Mrs. Linde of Miss Margaret Carter and the Helmer of Mr. Douglas Jeffries were all admirable. But Mr. Harold Scott scarcely caught the half melancholy, half cynical irony of Dr. Rank. While Miss Muriel Pratt, powerful and convincing as she was in the passage in which Mrs. Helmer realises that she has been living with "a strange man," failed, where Miss Janet Achurch notably succeeded—failed, that is to say, in cheating the audience into a provisional belief that the kittenish Nora of the earlier acts could have developed into the insurgent Nora of the final scene. W. A. L. B.

PLAYS TO BE SEEN.

"Abraham Lincoln," by John Drinkwater. At the Lyceum.

"A Bill of Divorcement," by Clemence Dane. At the St. Martin's.

"A Safety Match," by Ian Hay. At the Strand.

"Bull-Dog Drummond," by "Sapper." At Wyndham's.

"M'Lady," by Edgar Wallace. At the Playhouse.

"The Circle," by W. Somerset Maugham. At the Haymarket.

"The Knave of Diamonds," by Ethel M. Dell. At the Globe.

"If," by Lord Dunsany. At the Ambassadors.

"The Beggar's Opera," by John Gay. At the Lyric, Hammersmith.

"The Wandering Jew," by E. Temple Thurston. At the New.

"Threads," by Frank Stayton. To be produced at the St. James's in August.

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